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AMIGA

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PLUS AN EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO**

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IN MULTIMEDIA

ISSUE 76 A500, A600, A1200 COMPATIBLE **AMIGA**

SOFTWARE FILE

For the first time, we've got a complete guide to the world of Amiga software. It's a massive 100-page guide to the best software available, from the most popular to the most obscure. It's a must-have for every Amiga owner.

CRAFT

A complete guide to the world of Amiga software. It's a massive 100-page guide to the best software available, from the most popular to the most obscure. It's a must-have for every Amiga owner.

PLUS An exclusive playable demo of the new Amiga software.

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ISSUE 77 A500, A600, A1200 COMPATIBLE **AMIGA**

K240

A complete guide to the world of Amiga software. It's a massive 100-page guide to the best software available, from the most popular to the most obscure. It's a must-have for every Amiga owner.

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SIMON THE SORCERER SOLVED - PART ONE • VIDEO GRABBERS GO
ONE ON ONE • EXCLUSIVE PREVIEWS OF R240 AND SIM CITY 2000 •
MANCHESTER UNITED PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS - THE FIRST
REVIEW • OVERDRIVE 35, TV PAINT 2 AND EX-FM RATED!**



9 770963 009020

CU AMIGA

97%

“The ultimate in space adventure, Frontier is the single most important step forward for games this decade.”

PC ZONE

95%

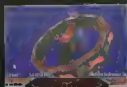
“Unrivalled classic, nothing comes close.”

AMIGA ACTION

93%

“Frontier is probably the best game I have ever played. This offers everything you could want in a game of this type.”

 KONAMI



PC Screen shot



AMIGA

DA
BRA
PRES

FRONTIER

E L
I

THE ONE

96%

only the very best

Available on PC,

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VGA Screen shot



PC Screen shot

DAVID
BEN
SENTS

FRONTIER

ELITE

II

“Like Elite before it, Frontier is a game that rises above its feeble competitors like a colossus and will be talked about in awe for years to come. It's better than you could ever have dreamed it to be.”

It matures with time

PC, AMIGA, ATARI ST

Developed by Kojima. Distributed by Gametek

C & VG

96%

“One of, if not the, biggest games ever, Frontier is a title that will make the rest of your software collection obsolete.”

AMIGA FORMAT

90%

“Frontier sucks you in and keeps you hostage. It's a monster.”

PC REVIEW

9/10

“The best space game ever.”

GAMETEK



PC1202-S

Power Computing and DKB have joined forces to produce the ultimate A1200 32-bit memory expansion. The PC1202-S is the latest industry standard 32 bit Sunco technology which allows you to use 2MB, 4MB and 8MB modules. Simply by adding either a PC1202-S to your Amiga 1200 will increase its processing speed by 213%. Comes with on-the-fly battery backed clock and optional FPU available.

Euro

PC1202-S **£79.95**
PC1202-S + 68882 20MHz .. **£99.95**

With 2MB

PC1202-S + 68882 20MHz **£159.95**
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Trade in your 2MB Series to upgrade to 4MB or 8MB, telephone for details

With 4MB

PC1202-S + 68882 20MHz **£239.95**
PC1202-S + 68882 20MHz .. **£259.95**
PC1202-S + 68882 33MHz .. **£275.95**
PC1202-S + 68882 40MHz .. **£299.95**

These can be used to drive away the board if you want to upgrade from 4MB to 8MB. In simple, just buy an extra 4MB Series

Extra 4MB Series **£159.95**



PC1204

The original PC1204 4MB 32-bit memory expansion is still available and a exceptional value.
PC1204 + 68882 50MHz .. **£319.95**

Homs Music Kit

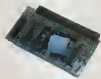
Mini Interface .. **£15.95**
Home Music Kit .. **£29.95**



MegaChip Ram

Increase your Amiga 500/1000 chip RAM to a total of 2MB. MegaChip does this by using an extra 1MB of RAM and drawing extra memory from any other RAM you have installed in your Amiga. No soldering is required.

MegaChip RAM **£159**



A500 Memory

A 4-chip 512K RAM expansion with a battery backed clock. Free software included. (A500+ compatible)

A500 Card with clock **£29**

A500 8MB

Expand your Amiga 500 from 2MB to 8MB of RAM. Plugs into the side slot, full auto-config, and through port

2MB Board **£139**

4MB Board .. **£219**

8MB Board .. **£299**

Memory Expansions

We manufacture a vast range of memory cards for the Amiga 500, 501x, 600, 1200, 1500, 2000, 3000 and 4000. Please telephone us for prices and availability

DKB 3126

Up to 128MB of RAM on your Amiga 500/400 using 4x1.16 and 32MB Series modules. This is a true Zorro III 32-bit memory board.

DKB 3128 6MB RAM **£90A**

Octogen 9C51-2

SCSI 2 board for the Amiga 2000 including memory expansion capabilities of up to 8MB

Octogen SCSI-2 **£129**



OKB 4091

The DKB 4091 (licensed by Comandeur) SCSI Host Adapter is a high performance board that connects up to seven SCSI devices to your Amiga. The DKB 4091 features Full Zero II implementation, fast SCSI-2 implementation, SCSI internal connector and ribbon cable, high density SCSI 2 external connector, direct memory access (DMA) and hardware to install a 2.5" hard drive on the board.

DKB 4091 .. **£399.95**



Vides Backup

Use a VCR as a backup storage device. Two buffered Amiga floppy disks fit on a 4hrs tape which can be used for an alternative hard disk backup system. What's more you can now watch television on your 16MHz minimum A Series or Plusa version is available

Vides Backup Scat .. **£65**

Vides Backup Phone .. **£60**

GVP Products

Power Computing are now one of the official distributors of GVP. High end professional hardware and software.

Image FX, Colour image processing **£100**

EGS Spectrum 24-bit card (2MB) .. **£369**

G-Lock (PAL video genlock) .. **£299**

HCS- SCSI controller .. **£129**

Hard disks available from 52MB to 1GB

Co-processors

All maths co-processors include crystals

20MHz .. **£40**

33MHz .. **£69**

40MHz .. **£89**

50MHz (PGA) .. **£154**



Epson Scanners

The GT-6500 and GT-3000 24-bit colour flatbed scanners from Epson were up to A4 in size, with output resolutions of up to 1200DPI on the GT-6500 and 1600DPI on the GT-8000 in colour or greyscale. The scanners include PowerScan or Image FX image software. Image FX - PowerScan (GB) only when you purchase a flatbed scanner

Epson GT-6500 PowerScan **£659**

Epson GT-6500 Image FX .. **£759**

Epson GT-8000 PowerScan .. **£1099**

Epson GT 8000 Image FX .. **£1199**

Document Feeder .. **£399**



PowerScan 4

Designed to be a powerful user interface, produce 256 greyscale images (in a AGA machine), scan in 64 greyscale (on a AGA Amiga can only display 16) add enhancements to greyscale images, special effects, new support for 16-bit scanners, add text to scans, available with mono or colour scanner. A1200/600 version available soon.

PowerScan 4 (Mono) .. **£119**

PowerScan 4 (Colour) .. **£239**

PowerScan 4 inc. OCR .. **£159**

PowerScan 4 upgrade interface .. **£50**

PowerScan 4 upgrade software .. **£20**

OCR Junior Software .. **£49**

OCR Full version upgrade .. **£49**

OCR full version only available in regional areas of OCR (Europe)

PowerScan IBM

For those who own an Amiga and IBM PC XT/AT it is now possible to use your PowerScan for both computers. The scanner includes 256 greyscales, 100-400 DPI resolution, scan for Windows, OCR software and storage function for the quick and easy joining of two partial images.

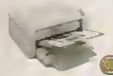
IBM interface kit software .. **£49.95**



Disk Expander

Disk Expander is an innovative program for all Amiga users. With this software solution you may double the capacity of your floppy disk at hard disk problems. The installation process takes only a few minutes and afterwards Disk Expander works invisible to the background. The compression rates vary from 30% to 70%. The only on the graphical interface guarantees that even the inexperienced user is able to use Disk Expander successfully without any problems. Disk Expander does not only expand the capacity of your hard disk drive, even floppy disks now have an average space of approximately 1.5 megabytes. (Works with all drives including SCSI, IDE, Floppy and even the RAD disk)

Disk Expander £35



Fargo Primere Printer

Now you can produce stunning, high quality output on paper, transparency film or even T-Shirt transfer from your Amiga. The Primere colour printer recreates colours of countless awards in the IBM-PC and Macintosh markets is also the perfect companion to any Amiga. Primere uses thermal transfer technology, a technology usually associated with much higher priced printers. Some of the features include: software drivers for Amiga, PC and Macintosh, optional photo-realistic upgrade kit (40x subpixels), and maintenance ribbon cartridges available for test printing only.

Primere printer £825

Photo realistic upgrade kit £215.95

Photo realistic refill kit (100 pages) £250

Photo realistic refill kit (25 pages) £79.95

4 colour ribbon (80 pages) £30.95

3 colour ribbon (115 pages) £39.95

Monochrome ribbon (400 pages) £31.95

Primere paper (A4 200 sheets) £18

T-Shirt transfer paper (M 10 sheets) £17.95



XL Drive

The XL Drive can be used with any Amiga Computer, and allows you to store a massive 176MB on a high density floppy diskette. The drive can also act as a standard 880b drive and can read and write disks written to an A4000 internal high density drive. XL Drive requires Kickstart 2 or above.

XL Drive external £89.95

XL Drive internal (all Amiga's) £79.95

XL Drive internal A4000 £69.95

PC880B Drive

The new updated PC880B is the most impressive disk drive to be used on the market. The drive includes a strong aluminium casing, an iron-clad drive, your blades, On-line compatible chip and the latest built-in backup hardware which allows X-Copy to copy and verify. What's more you can now control these features through your mouse, so there are no more annoying switches to use.

PC880B with Blitz Amiga £70

PC880B with Blitz & X-Copy £80

PC880B 1.76MB Upgrade £49.95

Features	PC880B	Amibit
Anti-disk	•	•
Anti-virus	•	•
Aluminium enclosure	•	•
Heavy mechanism	•	•
Isolation switch	•	•
Fast/stop	•	•
Upgradable to 1.76MB	•	•
On-line compatible chip	•	•
Built-in backup hardware	•	•
Mouse operated	•	•

PC880E Drive

This Drive is a high quality external floppy drive at a fraction of the price. As with all of our drives the PC880E has 1.3m/200, doubling switch and 12 month guarantee.

PC880E Economy Drive £49.95



Internal Drives

We use the same drive mechanism as Commodore so that you get the kind of reassurance is a cheaper price than other internal drives on the market.

PC881 A500 Internal drive £40

PC882 A2000 Internal drive £40

SCSI/IDE Drives

We can supply SCSI on IDE 3.5/2.5" hard drives in many different sizes including cables and installation software.

80MB IDE 2.5" Internal £179

120MB IDE 2.5" Internal £229

170MB IDE 3.5" Internal £270

520MB SCSI/IDE £169

80MB SCSI/IDE £179

160MB SCSI/IDE £249

200MB SCSI/IDE £349

Floptical Drive

The Floptical stores 20MB of data on a removable 3.5" disk. (A SCSI interface is required)

Floptical A2000 Kit £289

Floptical A500 Kit £389

20MB Floptical Diskette £25



Syquest Drives

The new 3.5" removable hard disk from Syquest stores 195MB on each cartridge, with a scanning time of 17ms. An internal and external version is available. (A SCSI controller is required)

3.5" IDE Internal £499

3.5" IDE External £579

3.5" SCSI Internal £538

3.5" SCSI External £599

3.5" 195MB Cartridge £76

Power Optical

128MB Optical Internal £779

128MB Optical External £879

128MB Optical Disk £40

SCSI Controller A2000 £129

Dual Drive

Our Dual Drive is packed with the many features of the PC880B whilst having two drives using only one port. This is another original from Power.

Dual Drive £125

X-Backup Pro

X-Backup Pro (Macintosh licensed by us) £29.95

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GET SERIOUS

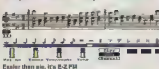
PRODUCTIVITY REVIEWS PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

Full Motion Video finally makes an appearance on the CD32 with Commodore's new FMV add-on card. We also test realtime video digitizers head to head and drop the verdict on TV Paint 2.

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Build your own driver with 3D Objects



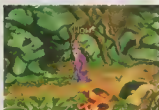
Easier than pie, it's E-Z FM

SCREEN SCENE

GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS

Are you ready for K240? Probably the best game this side of Clunkwood, it looks off our tangle selection of delightfully spiced game reviews, including the crispy *Winter Olympics* and soft-centered *SUB*, with a side-savouring of previews including an exclusive look at the deep-fried *Sim City 2000*. Tuck in!

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Wow!, says Simon. It's the first part of a complete tutorial for Adventureworld's latest (and best) game!



It's stupider than *Sloppy The Grumpy Shop* in army slipper! It's US Gold's official *Winter Olympics* license!

REGULARS

- 9 NEWS: The Amiga scene shows no signs of slowing down, and this month's wedge of new releases and product announcements is healthier than ever.
- 16 COVERINGS: See panel on this page.
- 47 EB32 ZONE: Original CD32 software is at last beginning to surface. The Orion man lifts the lid on a brand new story-driven game and some hot PC ports.
- 163 PRODUCTIVITY REVIEWS: See

- 134 GET SERIOUS: The latest amazing indie-developed game from Epicsoft is here, along with some anti-on games and the best disk image around.
- 137 PC UTILITIES: Where else could you get your hands on wordprocessors, utility compilers, paint packages and clip art for the price of a couple of beers? Drop this way to Bargain City.
- 146 ART GALLERY: More such examples of CU AMIGA's talented readers' art.

COVERDISKS

A superb professional quality database is yours this month in *Softwood File II SE*. There's also an exclusive playable demo of K240, and the AMOS extension that everyone's raving about, *Craft*.

DISK 76

PAGE 16

Heading this month's first disk is the excellent *Softwood File II SG* database. Whether you want to simply convert your phone book to your computer, or if you need a powerful filing tool for your business, this is what you need. Combining fast and efficient data management

with a very friendly user interface, *Softwood File* makes other databases look positively archaic. Not content with giving you a top full-price application, we've also found room on the disk for *Craft*, an essential add-on for all serious AMOS programmers. Now you can include blindingly fast fractal generator routines in your AMOS creations. Plus we've trimmed in *Word Selection*!

DISK 77

PAGE 24

It's the game everyone has been waiting for, and as always CU AMIGA is first with the news. *Gramlin's* sequel to *Utopia* is just about ready for release, so to whet your appetite, we proudly present our exclusive playable demo of one of the biggest releases of 1994 - *K240*. You are based on an asteroid

in one of the deeper areas of space, mining for rare ores. Unfortunately, so is a vile enemy alien, who not only wants the minerals, but also wants control of the sector. You're not really going to sit back passively and let them take over are you? Of course not. Colony control, mine administration, city planning, intersector exploration, catalogue shopping and more space combat than you ever thought possible. What are you waiting for!



COMPETITION CORNER
WITH LOADS OF GREAT STUFF IN OUR FAB
COMPETITIONS - THEY'RE GREAT!
51 OVERDRIVE
85 EMPIRE
82 GREMLIN
172 CALIGARI

SNIGGER SNIGGER?

What's so bloody funny? The game is called SkidMarks, what's wrong with you puns? Not only has every Amiga magazine devoted columns of childish schoolboy humour when reviewing the game, they seem to have missed the point. The point is that SkidMarks is a communications revolution just waiting to happen!

With a 2400 baud modem, registered SkidMarks racers will be able to compete in our national championship. Over the next few months we are fine tuning the comms code and polishing another 12 competition tracks to kick the championships off this June.

And if you haven't already got yourself a copy of the raciest, chasingest, car game of the decade then get your pedal to the metal and race down to your software shop now!



"A milestone in Amiga games. One of the most playable racers ever... If future BlitzBASIC games are as good as this one, we are going to see the Amiga and CD-32 become the game machine of the decade... SkidMarks is for Car Racing what Kick Off was to Football."
CU AMIGA SCREENSTAR (92%)

"An immensely satisfying experience akin to peeling those stringy white bits off tangerines... SkidMarks is without doubt the best racing game I have ever played outside of an arcade"
AMIGA ACTION ACCOLADE (90%)

"A no nonsense, adrenalin-pumping racer. SkidMarks is beautifully simple to play. Like SeneiSoccer, this is a timeless two-player game which is likely to be dragged out of your collection time and time again."
THE ONE (88%)

"It brings out those primal competitive urges, better than running around in woods naked and banging on big drums. It's packaged playability, it's canned competition. It is graatt!"
FORMAT GOLD (90%)



Acid Software
PO Box 3172
Hampstead
London NW1 9XA
ph 071 482 4066



BLITZ NEWS

Now AGA support is now available for Blitz2. All the enhanced display capabilities of the AGA chipset have been made available to Blitz2 programmers including 24 bit colour control, 256 colour screens, super hires horizontal scrolling, 64 pixel wide sprites and more.

New GadTools support offers the applications programmer access to 12 new gadget types including sliders, scrollbars, listviews and palette gadgets. New ASL support allows the opening of Screen, Font and File Palettes in single commands.

Currently under development for release in subsequent BUM issues (Blitz User Magazines) are:

- Developers-Pack for creating Blitz2 user extensions
- GadTools design utility
- CD32 specific command library
- Highspeed animation language
- Rerelease of Blitz2 3D
- 68020 optimized libraries

If you're programming the Amiga and haven't taken a serious look at the fastest growing language in the industry then do so now!



CU NEWS

FAST IV24 FOR A4000



This colourful picture is just one example of what the IV24 system can do.

GVP's popular IV24 24-bit graphics system is about to reappear in an updated form to cater for the A4000. Designed to take advantage of the A4000's faster video bus, the IV24-A4000 will run twice as fast as the previous versions when installed on an A4000.

The IV24-A4000 software set has also been reworked to provide a complete, consistent user interface for all application aspects of the IV24. The previous software offerings have been replaced with a bundled version of the image processing package Image FXV1.5 that fully supports the IV24 for frame grabbing, video processing, panning, and rendering out to tape. The IV24-A4000 is scheduled for release in early February.

GVP have also just announced the imminent release of a customised version of Image FX 1.5 designed to run specifically on the EGS-28/24 Spectrum graphics board. This is available to all registered owners of EGS-28/24 Spectrum directly from GVP for \$19.95.

For further information, contact Slice on 061 309 1111, or GVP USA on (0101) 610 337 8770.

AURAL ILLUSION 1.1

The latest revision of Aural Illusion, the 16-bit sample editor, has just been released. Featuring 20 variable effects, such as reverb, echo, delay, limiter, stereo, phase shift, distort, resonant, feedback, delay, wahwah and filter, it could be the most advanced sample editor yet seen. On top of the effects, there's a range of 30 other manipulations available, offering modulation, AM, FM and XOR operations, bitshifters, filters and more distortions.

A sample synthesiser gives you the chance to create your own sounds from sections of samples, which can then be stretched with wave morphing and mixing. Along with the sample generator, file formats supported are IFF, AIFF, AUR, RAW and 16-bit. Aural Illusion is available from Blacktron to chemistry. Glendole House, 77 Southwell Road, Exeter, Co Devon. Northern Ireland. RTD 3AE, priced at £40 inclusive, tel 0247 488173.

EXCALIBUR ACCELERATOR

Clipping speed increases up to 530% over a standard A4000/D40, the Excalibur due soon from RCS is the 'fastest accelerator available', according to RCS. In its basic form, the 3850-VAT unit promises a 400% speed gain, while the 33MHz model selling for £1150-VAT is responsible for the bold 530% increase claim. Contact RCS on 0203 473333.

APOLOGY CORNER

We miserably erred last issue in VFM that Richard Tyson, Street Rippers 2 and Action from Action 16 were all £32.99. The correct price is, of course £16.99.

SUGAR FREE MAX!

It's a well known fact that many computer games players are big fans of the comic genre, so it comes as some surprise that it has taken this long for the two to really mix - if you forget things like the Sonic Comic and the Malibu House game Redhawk. Max Overload is a new publication from Dark Horse International, the company responsible for Aliens, Star Wars, Predator and RoboCop comics among others. The London-based firm have signed up the rights to Lamming, Tolkien & Eard and Core Design's



Above: Chuck and his friends.

Chuck Rock for their first issue, which should just have appeared on the shelves as you read this.

Max Overload promises 'rolling edge comedy and a host of truly game related features' in a mammoth 84 full-colour pages tome and costs just £1.95. For more information, call Boston Marketing on 071 490 1323.

DEMOMANIAC

DIV demos are promised from Black Legend's forthcoming DemoManiac. Along similar lines to Red Sector's Demo Generator, DemoManiac is aimed at anyone who wants to rise their Amiga to produce stunning audio-visual sequences, without having to spend years of sweat and toil learning the coding tricks of top demo programmers. Available effects and features include vectors, vector landscapes, vector worlds, animations, 6 layers of simultaneous graphic effects, importing of graphics and music, script control, zoom, fade in/out, bumps, support for 020/030/040 processors and AGA graphics, joystick and mouse controlled effects, IFF image, animation and sample support.

We'll have more for you next month, but for now you can contact Kompart on 0436 840003.

TECHNICOLOUR STARDUST

Bloodhouse: those rogues who created the absolutely fabulous *Stardust* – an *Asteroids* clone that featured some of the hottest Amiga graphics ever – have gone that one step further and started work on a 256 AGA version of the game. Going under the moniker of *Superstardust*, the game will be hard disk installable, feature six traced backdrops and enormous and enhanced 256 colour graphics, plus the same stunning stereo sound and parallax scrolling tunnels that made the original so popular. Call Daze Marketing on 071 326 2762.

PRACTICALLY HALF PRICE!

You've seen *The Soccer Expert* reviewed on page 79, and read how it correctly predicted the results of seven out of ten matches. Included the only three draws in those ten. We all know how risky gambling is, so just to reduce the odds a little we've done a little deal with Vothia Software. Normally, *The Soccer Expert* is a very reasonable £16.95, but for CU AMIGA readers, you can pick the full package up for only £10! A saving of nearly seven quid! Not only that, but when you upgrade to next year's edition of *The Soccer Expert*, you get your £10 back!! To make full use of this superb offer, just fill out the coupon below and send it to: Vothia, 32 High Street, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7JP.

Please rush me _____ copies of *The Soccer Expert* at the once in a lifetime special offer price of £10.00. What's more, when I find that I really like it, I can state my two pence (and against the price of *The Soccer Expert* 94/95).

Name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____
Please make cheques payable to Vothia

AMIGA C CLUB

When learning to program the Amiga in C you need all the help you can get – and help is exactly what the Amiga C Club offers. It was started by Anders Ejerin who wrote a disk based C Encyclopedia, now in its third edition. The encyclopedia is now available on the Internet most libraries and public domain libraries, but it can also be obtained directly from Anders himself.

Now the C Club has joined a comprehensive library of disks, each one crammed with hard-to-obtain information

PHILIPS ANNOUNCE 30 CD MOVIES

Philips recently announced a deal signed with Metro Goldwyn Meyer Inc to distribute 30 CD films, primarily for the Philips CD-i, which should be fully compatible with an FMV-equipped CD32.

Philips is extremely excited to add MGM/UA's titles to the growing list of films available on the five-inch format, states John Hawkins, President and General Manager of Worldwide Distribution for Philips Media. 'This format is impressive both for its technological advances and for the range of titles last becoming available to the consumer.'

The MGM/UA library is comprised of titles that represent some of Hollywood's best known films. Under the agreement, Philips will be able to select from such classics as *A Fistful of Dollars*, *Brainin*, *Rocky*, *Raging Bull* and *The Pink Panther*. The library also contains 16 James Bond titles, as well as classics from Clint Eastwood, Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. Also included are the recent hits *Benny and Joon*, and *Thelma and Louise*.



on programming and debugging. There are also disks containing text editors, compilers – even life from Kernel Manuals in a lightning form. The club has just opened it's own bulletin board, running on the Xarelink system on an Amiga 2500. The board is open 24 hours a day to help with those late-night programming sessions, and can be reached on Sweden 08 06 1755 45 85.


For more information on joining The C Club, or for more details on the library, or the online photograph digitizing and sound sampling services, write to: Anders Ejerin, The Amiga C Club, Telavägen 22, 181 41 LINGÖ, Sweden.

OCTAMED 5 OFFER

If you've still not got your hands on the excellent *Octamed V5*, the 92% top-rated music package, you can get your copy of the program and three tutorial disks for the crazy low-down price and please pay me old mate asking price of just £29.99 plus £1 post and packing. That's a saving of £3 off the standard mark-up.

If you've previously bought *Octamed* from Saxonsoft without the tutorial, you can pick up the three tutorial disks for £14.99 plus £1 post and packing, saving £1 from the normal price. Cheques or postal orders should be sent to: Saxonsoft Computing, The Business Centre, 1st Floor, 99 Woodlands Avenue, Rushgreen, West Sussex, BN16 3EY. Include this panel with your order.

OCTAMED Professional v5.00		Name: _____	
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TEAM SPIRIT

New users to the Amiga market probably won't know what all the fuss is about. Team who? They say, Team what? If you've missed the boat in the rush to tell Marilyn Brown and co. what a wonderful bunch they are, then here's your chance to catch up. The Team 17 Collection - Volume One contains three of their best loved hits, at the extremely affordable price of £29.99. Body Blows is the game that knocked Streetfighter crying back to nursery. Superdive is the cutest and gruntest platformer yet and Overdrive is what your joystick and deep throaty 'brum brum' sounds were made for. What you hanging around for? Call Team 17 on 0824 291867.

SOUND IMPROVEMENT

esSoft, who recently incorporated Microdeal into their fold, have announced two items of interest to Amiga sound and music fanatics.

The first concerns the upgrading of the Clonix 16-bit sampling software. As it uses the parallel port, Clonix can sometimes get confused when used with Amigas fitted with a 68020 or better processor. This is especially unfortunate as some extra processing really is needed to make the most of the 16-bit multi-sample playback features.

The new version 1.5 software finally solves these problems for good, which means all Amigas, from the humble A600 to the top of the range A4000 can benefit from Clonix's 16-bit sound.

Potentially even more interesting is the information released regarding a brand new sound sampling package. As yet unnamed, the new hardware connects via the PCMCIA slot on the A1200 and A600 to offer 12-bit stereo sampling, with a direct to disk option. When used properly 12-bit sound can be almost as good as CD quality 16-bit and all would-be hi-fi sample fans should be prepared to rush out and buy in. Meich. The best news of all is the price, provisionally set at only £79.95, this kit costs only a little more than standard 8-bit samplers. Stay with GU Amiga for a full review.

Finally, those interested in VideoMaster (reviewed this issue) will be pleased to learn that the IFF/Anim conversion software has been finished and is now being included on the same disk as the standard VideoMaster software. The third alone utility will convert VideoMaster films into Amiga-standard Anim files which can be played back with most animation players.

ENGLAND BACK IN THE WORLD CUP?

Well, not quite. Sierra, those nice people who brought us so many wonderful graphic adventures, have decided to join in the mammoth kickabout currently kicking and releasing their own soccer game based on the World Cup, *Soccer World Cup*, as it is imaginatively titled. It features a Strider style focused perspective viewpoint, and promises even more realistic football action than ever before. New features include referees that run around the pitch after the ball, stretchable teams and a physics who actually runs out to replace your players! We'll have a full review next issue.

GOING FOR GOLD



Compilation freaks, hold on to your hats. Empire, those lovely people over in Finchley are releasing yet another of those incredible Award Winners packs. Priced at £29.98, by the time you read this you should be able to get your mitts on Award Winners Gold Edition, featuring in no particular order the ground breaking *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, Sensible's *Amazing Soccer*, that speedy *Space Ninjo* otherwise known as *Zoot* and the game that slanted it all - *Elite*. It came in a little too late for this issue's reviews, but it goes without saying that it's one of the best compilations we've ever seen. For more information, call Empire on 081 343 9143.

CD32 IN NON PRICE DROP SENSATION

Last month we stated that the CD32 was in deep in price by £100 in the first quarter of this year. Comments we would like to state that contrary to industry rumors, there are no firm plans to cut the price. Low expectations did state in Toronto last month that the CD32 was to be cut by \$100 in the US, but this apparently will have no effect on the European market price.

LORDY LORDY



VE are gearing up to unleash Rowan Software's thrilling new flight simulator *Overlord - D-Day*. Using state-of-the-art megamap animation and Gouraud shading techniques, the game features an atmospheric recreation of the battle for air supremacy in the run up to June 6th 1944 - D-Day. The player will be able to fly Spitfires, Mustangs and Typhoons against Focke-Wulf, Ju88s and Heinkel 111 enemy craft, and the whole thing has been described as "mind bogglingly realistic" by a Virgin spokesperson. For more, call Virgin on 081 960 2255.

30

THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

Those Cambridge boys and girls have kept things a little quiet recently, but have just stepped out of the closet to unveil no less than FIVE new products in development. The shock news is that NONE of them have anything to do with JAMES POND. Not a funny joke in sight. Not a single Plesian reference. For example, Mr Migoo, based on the popular cartoon of the same name, has no fish in it whatsoever, although the various graphics make the game look decidedly similar to the robot cartoon. *Bratol Soccer* is the conflict of



Football, and this only plays you'd find a fish in here is in the shower room, though we doubt it. *Tail Island* is an odd one, as a colourful collection of *Tail Island* inhabitants work through their daily lives. You never know, one of them might eat fish.

Motor Men sees Mickey the Micro saving the day when the bad fog of pollution sends the factory into chaos, leaving him to sort out the mess in a brain-teasing time sort of way. *Nautil World* is the strangest of the lot. Remember *Little Computer People*, where you had to keep a little chap entertained? Take that (scream), then add the fact that you have to educate them. Strange, and not a fun in sight. James Pond is the coming hot. Doops. Call Millennium on 0223 644304.



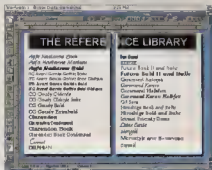
WORDWORTH 3

If you like a few bells and whistles on your word processor, *Wordworth 3* could be right up your street. Already an accomplished word processor in its previous release, the new version 3 has an impressive number of promised new features.

Auto correction will give you the option of automatic spell-checking and correction while you type. Activated by the spacebar, the auto-corrector can be used as a simple spell-checker, or as a means of speeding up your typing by defining words to abbreviations. For example, if you find yourself getting bored of constantly typing your company name in correspondence, you could tell *Wordworth 3* to replace the letters "MMM" with "Manchester Multimedia Magnates", thus saving your precious pixels from too much wear and tear on the keyboard.

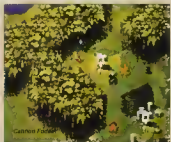
An online librarian feature is also billed. Another labour-saving feature, this could act as an alternative to repeatedly typing out often-used addresses, paragraphs and so on, which could be written once, stored, and then recalled from a menu and pasted in to the current document. A collection of 50 *Agfa Compagraphics* fonts are also included.

Extensive file format support should ensure compatibility with Mac, DOS and Windows-based systems. Digite's own custom printer drivers come with the update, replacing the *Workbench* drivers in order to get the most from your printer. The update will be available to registered *Wordworth* users for £49.99. Users of other WPs can upgrade for £59.99. Contact Meridian Software on 061 543 3500.



ART DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL 2.5

As we go to press, news has just reached us of the latest update to *The Art Department Professional*, now up to version 2.5. Details are sketchy at the moment, but we have it on good authority that it features a style-guide compliant user interface. Meridian Distribution are handling the main distribution (tel 061 543 3500), while Emerald Creative Technology Ltd are dealing with upgrades for registered users, and can be contacted on 061 715 8666.



TWO'S COMPANY

Sensible Software, the purveyors of such fine software as *Canon Fodder*, *Wok and a Sensible Soccer*, have joined arms with Virgin Interactive Entertainment (formerly Virgin Games) and announced their big Christmas release.

Sensible Golf Two game is part of a deal between the two companies that will see Sensible expanding all across the console formats, and has Sensible Software preparing to sell the sports genre right across more with a golf game that will offer all the playability and edelweissness that *Soccer* has. More news we will get it.



THE MILITARY SIMULATION OF THE YEAR

Don't take our word for it... Take their word for it!

"Simple to use, but complex in nature, Campaign II is one of the most demanding games available... a well researched and truly compelling in-depth warfare simulation."

PC POWER

"Highly playable, one can but hope for a third in the series."

CU AMIGA

"It's strategy, it's simulation, it's downright realistic warfare."

AMIGA ACTION

"Here's Campaign II - bigger, bolder, and flawless."

PC HOME

"A complex game with easy controls and great depth - smart."

AMIGA FORMAT

Campaign II heralds a new generation of WAR Simulations with more depth than ever before and fabulous 3D action. The sequel to the best selling "Campaign" has emerged as the most comprehensive simulation with new improved strategy at any level in the chain of command (C.O.C.), closely resembling that of a real military situation.

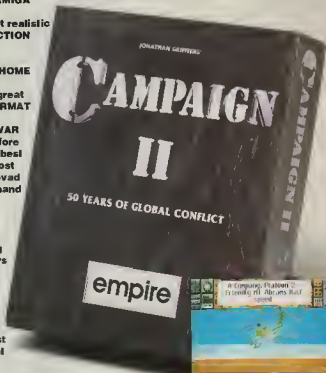
• Featuring all the modern weapons systems: guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, laser rangefinders, gun stabilizers and night sights.

• Now features include now improved strategy, helicopters and animated Infantry.

• Including over 130 templates of the most significant military forces from 56 different nations of the last 50 years.

• Battle scenarios include: Vietnam, Korea, 6 day war and Desert Storm.

• Pack includes sophisticated map and battle editor, 170 page equipment fact finder, extensive user guide and photographic journal.



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» COMMODORE WRITES

Finally all the joys of sailing, Commodore MD Dardis Pleasure sports the joys on the rising screens of the C32.

A luck has just slipped into my desk bearing rather pleasant news. According to Goring, sales of Amiga C32 software now exceed sales of Mega CD software by 34.6% to 32.8%. The balance has been falling steadily in one direction for the last few weeks, and I suspect is any as yet away from Sega at the same rate in the near future.

The reason I'm so pleased about this is that quality and quantity of Amiga games has always been the key to the success of the range, and thanks to the diligent and imaginative developers it looks as if Amiga C32 is gaining the same support as its floppy relatives.

Already there are 39 titles available (at the new marbles). Every week more titles emerge—some are obviously ports but others are specially authored or released simultaneously with other formats. We're in constant touch with the publishers so we know what some of the games coming your way. In a few weeks time, games like King of the Rings and Microcosm will be as stable as C32, and I'm really pleased to see companies such as Grendel and Team 17 putting out budget compilations which take advantage of CD's huge memory. That's one of the reasons we all want CD to work like a hot.

"I can't be long before Sallip starts work on a video CD chart. Slightly but surely the new platform is gaining steam. In January the music industry gathered at the, shall we say 'almshouse'. Margaret took to discuss Video CD.

Many of us here suspected that remix compilations would give momentum to the new format. And here they are doing just that. BMG, PMA, Polygram and Castle were there plugging to re-release parts of their catalogue on Video CD.

Their customers, more so than movie fans, are used to CD as a medium so the enthusiasm of the main big is understandable. The first live MPEG titles from artists like the Eurythmics, Queen and David Bowie will be in the shops in April.

Bowie will be the shops in April. I can't be long before Sallip starts work on a video CD chart. Slightly but surely the new platform is gaining steam.

release Video CD titles simultaneously with VHS and that is great news.



LOGIPAD

There are pads, and there are Logipads. This is the latter of the two, and mighty logical it is too.

Featuring no less than six fire buttons, eight-directional thumb control, dedicated buttons and independent fire buttons. Retailing at £18.99, the Logipad is available from Spectravideo, who can be reached on 081 902 2211.



MORE THAN MOST CAN HEIMDALL!

After many months of strenuous coding, Heimdall 2 is just about nearing completion, and Core Design are just chuffed to bits about it.

Based in the age of Ragnarok, the game tells the tale of the Hakams, vile creatures created by Loki (he mean dude) who wants revenge upon the world for stepping him off his Godly powers.

The Gods themselves agree that something must be done to stop him, and send Heimdall—the hero of the first game, to cleanse the world once more.

At the moment, the whole thing looks incredible, even better than the first game. We'll have more news next month, but in the meantime for more information you can contact Core Design on 0332 297797.

AND A FREE BOOK AS WELL!

Engineers have made more than a small impact on the warring front, and they continue this month with the release of Edward Graham's *The Ace and The Gray*. Based on the American Civil War, the game lets you play out the Union's or the Confederacy's war and the most important strategy in American history. This might sound like a right treat for wargame fans, but not! There's a moral if you have a copy now. You'll find a present in the box in the shape of a huge tall illustrated history of the Civil War in book form. Who said they aren't good to you? We'll have a full review soon.

BEGINNER'S LUCK

Some guys get all the luck, as the Robert Palmer song goes, and newcomers to the A1200 fall easily into that category. Bruce Smith Books are about to release the *Amiga A1200 Beginners Pack*, everything you could possibly need to get started with your machine. £39.95 gets you Bruce Smith's bestselling *A1200 Insider Guide*, a copy of *A1200 Next Steps*, an extensive one-hour tutorial video and four disks packed with essential PD and Shareware. What more could you possibly ask for? For more information, please call BSB on 0923 894355.



YOUR CHOICE

GAMES	UTILITIES
GA 001 ALL REGION	UT 001 COPY FILE
GA 010 J.P. SELLER'S V.B.	UT 010 MAKE CATCH
GA 015 THE COMPASS	UT 015 MAKE CATCH
GA 020 MEGA-10	UT 020 MAKE CATCH
GA 025 (JAWING)	UT 025 MAKE CATCH
GA 030 WARRIOR'S PORT	UT 030 MAKE CATCH
GA 035 SUPER WARRIOR	UT 035 MAKE CATCH
GA 040 PANDA-UT	UT 040 MAKE CATCH
GA 045 (JAWING)	UT 045 MAKE CATCH
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but the Aliens will make you
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COMMAND EARTH'S FORCES AGAINST THE ALIEN TERROR

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FOR IBM PC COMPATIBLES AND COMMODORE AMIGA



YOUR QUICK-START GUIDE TO LOADING DISK 76

Before you start, write protect the disk to prevent any mishaps. You're also going to need two blank disks (they don't have to be formatted).

1. Put disk 76 into the internal drive.
2. Double click the CU #76 icon.
3. Double click the Craft or Optics Icons according to which program you want to look at. Some programs that you choose will need to be expanded into its own separate disk. Follow the on-screen instructions to do that.
4. Hit **Next** from your expanded disk or overwrites only. Do not lose from your Workbench or hard drive, otherwise you will be told that you don't have the update library—what? In fact, as per expanded disk.

File IISG is a database program, which means that you can use it to store lots of pieces of related information, such as addresses, or lists of records or games. You can even use it to store pictures and sound samples.

The File IISG program does not need to be expanded. It can be run immediately from the coverdisk. However, because you can customize the program to your own preferences, you are strongly advised to make a back-up copy of the coverdisk and use that instead.



The program looks a little barren when you first load it, but this plain exterior hides a powerful database program.

To load the program, simply double click on its icon, and after a few moments the main window will appear. Before you can use the program for entering data, you'll first need to specify the subject headings and type of information that you want to store. To do that, select **Define Date** from the **Column** menu. A

COVERDISK 76

This month's knockout package of software includes **File IISG**, an excellent data-base program from Softwood, **Craft**, a fantastic extension for AMOS which gives you dozens of extra commands to help you create even more impressive programs and enjoy part two of our **Weird Science** series.

FILE IISG

requester will appear ready for you to define a new column. You'll see the words "Column Name" with the cursor all ready for you to enter a new name. Let's assume that you are creating a phone list. The first item in your list would be the people's surnames so just type **Surname**. Now you must indicate the type of data—there are ten types to choose from. The type that you choose depends on the sort of data that you'll be entering in the column. Here are the different types:

Text: You can enter any printable character into this type of column.

Amount: You can only enter numbers and decimal places.

Date: You can only enter dates into this type of column.

Time: You can only enter times into this type of requester.

Yes/No: Yes or No answers only in this type.

Phone: Numbers, spaces and brackets go in this column.

Alpha: Upper and lower case letters only. No numbers or punctuation.

A/N: Numbers and letters only. No punctuation.



The program supports 10 different data types. By choosing the correct type for each column, you can save both disk space and memory. If you're not sure which one to choose, play it safe and select **Text**.

Picture: This column can hold IFF Pictures (not AGA or 24-bit).

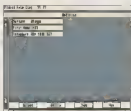
Sound: This column can hold IFF samples.

Because surnames can contain letters and punctuation, you need to

specify the **Text** data type so click on the word **Text**, then click **OK** to return to the main screen. Now you'll need to define a column for the first name and phone number. Select **Define Date** again and call the column **First Name**. This time the data type can be **Alpha** because there are no first names with punctuation or numbers. When you come to define the telephone number, remember to define it as the **Phone** data type.

Having defined your three columns, you're ready to enter some data. On the main screen the three columns should be visible, so go into data entry mode and move the cursor into the first column next to the word "New". Click the left mouse button and the display should switch to show your record as a form with the three column names one on top of the other. You'll notice that the cursor (a vertical line) is in the first data area ready for you to start typing. Type a surname of your choice then press **enter** or **enter**. As you do so, the cursor jumps down to the next box, so type a first name and press **enter**. All that remains is to type a phone number, so input a number of your choice then once more press **enter**.

This time, instead of the jumping



This is the screen where you'll enter your data. The program automatically capitalizes each word, although you can switch this feature off if you want to.

down to the next data area on the page, the page disappears and is

replaced by a blank one ready for you to enter more names.

Of course the information is not lost, it's merely been stored in memory ready for you to look at later.

Now enter four more names and phone numbers so that we have a database containing five entries in all. When you've entered the fifth phone number, we want to return to the main window.



This is what you should see once you've added some records, though the column widths are wrong.

To do this you can either select **List** from the **Options** menu at the top of the screen, or click anywhere on the pale cream coloured bar at the bottom of the screen.

Back at the main window—unless all your friends have very short names—chances are some of the letters have been chopped off because the column isn't wide enough.

Not to worry: your data is still intact. It's just that the screen display hasn't been adjusted yet. To do that, move the cursor into the very pale cream coloured strip at the top of the screen, and place over the line at the end of the first column. As you do so, the pointer changes to show the words "Column width". Now press the left mouse button down and keeping it pressed, drag the column to the width you require.

So now we've created a small database, let's save it in case of accidents. Using the mouse, select **Save** as from the **File** menu. A requester will appear containing the words

"DHO Unrelated FLR" This is the file name and path. The program expects all databases to have the characters FLR after their name. To save your database delete



The new requester. Alter the path and file name to suit your own preferences. Don't forget to press the characters FLR after the name. For example, if you want to save your database on a disk in the external drive in a drawer called DATA, with a file name of ADDRESSES, type D:\DATA\ADDRESSES.FLR

everything in this requester and enter the drive name and file name that you wish to use. Don't forget to add the characters FLR after the name. For example, if you want to save your database on a disk in the external drive in a drawer called DATA, with a file name of ADDRESSES, type D:\DATA\ADDRESSES.FLR

Once you've entered a name, press return or click OK and the file will be saved. Unless you alter the default settings the program will always look to DHO when you come to load and save data.

To change those settings, select Default Runtime Values from the Desk menu. A requester will appear in which the Database, Sound and Picture path names are all specified.

To change them, simply erase the current values, and replace them with the path names of your choice. Select OK to return to the program, and the new path names will auto-

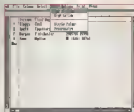


This is where you can alter a number of crucial settings, such as memory usage and the default path names to your various files.

matically be saved to the disk if it is not write protected.

New list a response you want to alter. In order in which the names in your database are presented. The program gives you the option to arrange data in forward or reverse alphabetical order.

To arrange a column, simply click on the column name (it should turn blue) then select Low to high or high to low from the Sort menu according to your preference. The date will be



Having selected a column name, you can use the program to arrange the data as you like, either in alphabetical or reverse order for you.

automatically rearranged for you. You can also alter each column's justification, that is, the way the text is presented within the column. There are three options. Left, where the text is aligned with the left hand edge of the column - this is the default. Right, the opposite to left which is useful when a column contains numbers. Centre aligns text up with the centre of each column so there is an equal amount of space at each end. To alter a column's justification, click on the column name then select Left, Centre or Right from the Column menu.

That's all we've got space for here, but if you want to get the very best out of this superb program, you might like to order a full manual directly from Softwood Enquire. Full details on page 25.

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD

If your computer screen is slow to work or it blinks, then follow the simple guidelines. Firstly, remove all unnecessary peripherals such as printers, modems etc. Follow the instructions of these pages to the letter, and if after that you find that the disk still does not work, call the PC Wise helpline on 0495 550505. Helpline on 1037 and 1236. Monday to Friday. If they advise you that the disk is faulty, then you'll find an envelope with a covering letter explaining the problem.

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Please include 28p per disk to cover postage and packing (55p for overseas readers). Your disk will be tested and a new, working one dispatched to you as soon as possible. Please note that neither we nor PC Wise accept responsibility for any disk damaged due to negligence on the part of the user.

DISK VIRUSES

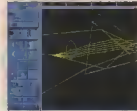
We try to ensure that viruses do not get on your disks. We always have the most advanced virus checkers available when the disk is completed and every program goes through rigorous testing. However, we can accept no responsibility for possible damage incurred by viruses which have escaped our attention.

WEIRD SCIENCE

CU AMIGA proudly presents part two of our *Weird Science* series bringing the wonders of science into your Amiga. This month, we give you the chance to experiment with the world of Optics, examining the way that light and lenses behave. Who knows, perhaps one day you'll be able to use this knowledge to design your very own lasers sometime in the future!

UPLOADING

To load the program, insert the decompressed disk into your computer and turn the machine on. After a few minutes of loading, the



Use this month's *Weird Science* program to test how light rays move and react to modifiers.

Workbench screen will appear. Double click on the optics icon, then double click on the optics icon that appears in the window that opens. The program will automatically load in a few moments and you'll be presented with the main screen.

Provided you don't click the Save button, nothing that you can do on this screen can in any way do any damage so by all means experiment by clicking buttons, etc. Provided your disk is write protected, even the Save button will have no effect.

SEE THE LIGHT

The program consists of two basic elements, the light sources and the modifiers. There are three light sources: single beam, divergent ray and parallel ray. These are represented by the three top icons with yellow lines coming out of them.

Select the type of light source you want and position it on the screen. As you click the mouse button, a requester will appear which allows

This is the requester you'll see as you position a light source. It lets you specify the light's colour and other optical qualities.



you further specify the characteristics of the light. Once you've set this up according to your requirements, click OK to place the light source.

Now you

must do the same thing with the modifiers. There are five different lenses: a flat mirrored surface, a flat aspherical surface, a three or four surface lens, a curved mirror and a curved lens. The icons representing these are to be found immediately below the light source icons.

LENS US A FIVER

Select the modifier you want to use, position it where you want it, then click



When you place a lens, you'll be offered the opportunity to tailor it to your exact requirements.

the mouse button, upon which you will again be shown a requester allowing you to customise the modifier. If you choose the multi surface lens, you'll need to define two or three of the surfaces, and to do that, just click the start and position of each one.

To reset the light beams without altering the modifiers, click the R button. To redraw the beams, click G.

IDEAL WORLD

When you have played around with the program to your heart's content, you can then choose whether to see the results of your experiment under Real/World or Ideal conditions by clicking the Real/Ideal switch at the top of the screen. The program will then redraw the beams accordingly and you can watch in amazement.



By clicking the Ideal switch at the top of the screen, you can see what would probably happen if your experiment was performed under perfect conditions.

THE WORLD OF SCALA

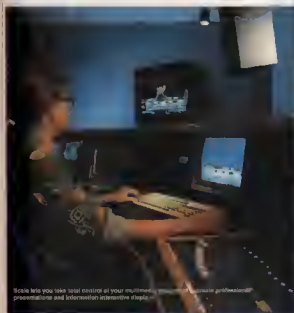
SPECIAL OFFER!

Scala UK are proud to present an exclusive offer for CU AMIGA readers.

If you've already used this month's cover disk and followed the tutorial in this issue you'll know what a superb program *Scala Home Teller* is. Now if you want to take things a step further you can order the full *Home Teller* manual complete with two extra disks simply bursting at the seams with over 150 extra symbols and additional clip art for use with *Home Teller*. That means that you'll be able to create even more original and interesting titles, as well as learning how to get the very last drop of power from the program! The manual and two disks cost only £14.95, and CU AMIGA readers who take advantage of this unique opportunity will also receive automatic membership to the newly formed *Scala Club*. The *Scala Club* is an organisation dedicated solely to keeping *Scala* product users updated on the latest *Scala* news and innovations. Members will receive a packed magazine and are assured of priority treatment in any future *Scala* promotions!

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Scala MM200 is the multimedia tool you've always dreamed of. *MM200* gives you the power to unleash your imagination. Its superior functionality and ease-of-use gives you the ability to bring your ideas to life using 15 specially-designed TV typefaces, 80 sophisticated wipes (including stretch, flow, flipcolor and cube), 60 quality backgrounds and 80 ready-made graphic symbols for truly professional results. With *MM200* you can integrate many different types of information, such as CD Audio tracks, MIDI music files, animations and single frames, sound samples and even Soundtracker compatible music modules. This information can be retrieved from a variety of sources, including CD ROM, CD Audio, MIDI devices, video players and, of course, disk. To find out more about the *MM200* or for a free brochure ring *Scala UK Ltd* on 0920 444294.



Scala lets you take total control of your multimedia presentations and interactivative displays.



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COVERDISK 76

Just because *Blitz Basic 2* has stolen AMOS' throne doesn't mean to say that programmers have neglected Europress' brilliant BASIC language. Jason Holborn takes you through Black Legend's *Craft* extension.

CRAFT INSTRUCTIONS

Black Legend's *Craft* is an extension for Europress' AMOS programming language that adds no fewer than 160 new commands to the existing AMOS instruction set.

For AMOS programmers everywhere: *Craft* is the bees knees - short for 'Colour, Requests, Audio, Fractals and Turtle'. *Craft* addresses many of the areas that the basic AMOS instruction set neglects.

As you can probably guess from the definition above, *Craft* gives you commands for creating fractal graphics, a range of powerful requesters and a lot more besides.

Before you can use the demonstration version of *Craft* on this month's coverdisk, you'll need to not only decompress the *Craft* file but also install the *Craft* extension

files on your copy of AMOS. *Craft* fully supports both AMOS Classic and AMOS Professional although it won't work with Easy AMOS. Follow the detailed instructions within the box elsewhere on these pages and you won't go far wrong.

ABOUT TURN

Once you've installed *Craft* you're ready to start using it. Because *Craft* is an AMOS extension, you'll have to start by booting up your copy of AMOS with the *Craft* extension files installed. If you want to check to make sure that *Craft* has indeed been successfully installed, use the 'About Loaded Extensions' option from the 'AMOS' pull down menu in AMOS Professional - extensions 18 and 19 should be '*Craft* extension' and '*MustCraft* extension' respectively followed by

your name. If you're using the Classic version of AMOS, a list of all loaded extensions should be displayed when you first boot up.

Right, now we're ready to get stuck into *Craft* - if you just can't wait to see what *Craft* is capable of, why not load up a couple of the demonstration programs on the '*Craft* Examples' disk which was

created by the *Craft* installation program? These can be found in a drawer called 'Examples' on the disk. Inside this drawer you'll find a number of demonstrations and a number of additional drawers which contain even more examples covering particular areas of *Craft* obvious talents - Fractals, Audio etc.

So now, give 'em a whirl



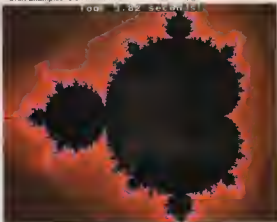
Craft adds over 160 new commands to the existing AMOS instruction set that cover a whole range of different areas of computing.

INSTALLING CRAFT

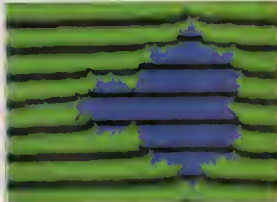
Craft cannot be run directly from our coverdisk. You must have a copy of AMOS. If so, a fair bit of setting up is necessary before you can experience the delights that *Craft* has to offer. The first thing you must do is to decompress the *Craft* file which has been cleverly packed onto our coverdisk using the PU disk packer, DMS. All you have to do is to double click on the *Craft* icon and a window will appear prompting you to insert a blank disk - follow these onscreen prompts and DMS will unpack *Craft* onto your disk. You're then ready to move onto the next stage.

Obviously *Craft* is of little use to you unless you own a copy of either AMOS Classic (we gave it away on our coverdisk many months ago) or - better still - AMOS Professional. If you don't own AMOS then you may as well stop right here. If you do own AMOS, however, you can start to install *Craft* onto your copy of AMOS. The first thing to do is to reveal your machine and load up from the *Craft* disk that we decompressed earlier. After a few seconds, a very busy screen containing the *Craft* logo will pop up onto the screen and you'll be prompted to enter your first name and then your surname. *Craft* automatically embeds this into your copy of the extension when it is installed, so it's important you don't enter anything you'd like. All Lengthening (apologies to Isaac Asimov for using his name).

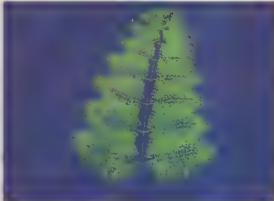
Once you've entered your name, *Craft* will then write it to the disk and prompt you to reveal your Amiga. Do as it says and then wait for *Craft* to load up again. When it does, you should see an entirely new screen containing a list of the different versions of AMOS which *Craft* can handle - click on the version of AMOS that you own (AMOS Pro causes a bit of anything greater than version 1.11 should click on the '1.11' gently) and *Craft* will install onto your version of AMOS. During this extensive installation process the *Craft* installer program will also create a second disk containing lots of *Craft* demonstration programs so have a blank disk at the ready.



Craft's fractal generation commands are surprisingly quick - this impressive Mandelbrot image took under six seconds to produce!



Clever use of the 'Fr Colour' command can produce some interesting results!



Organic's images such as this test are well suited to Craft's Turtle graphics commands.

CRAFT LAID BARE

We have briefly looked at what Craft is capable of, but now it's time to look a bit deeper.

It's impossible to adequately discuss every command in the amount of space that we have available here (so it will definitely be worth you while buying the Craft manual that explains them all in detail). In the meantime however, here's a

out about the rest as they allow you to create what Craft calls 'Palette Banks' (which are similar to 'Sprite' banks but they hold palettes) and then perform all manner of palette manipulation operations such as copying colours, swapping colours (a bit like the dPaint 'Exchange' option) and even speeding colours to produce a range of shades between the first and last colour in the spread.

REQUESTERS

AMOS has never been particularly strong on the requesters front but Craft sorts this little problem out with the addition of two new Requester commands - 'Sys Request' and 'Guru Alert'. Not surprisingly Sys Request produces a system requester similar to the 'Insert Disk In Drive Off' requester you see on the Workbench (but in AMOS style) and 'Guru Alert' produces one of those flashing alerts that appear on the screen every time something terrible has happened.

EXTENDED AUDIO SUPPORT

I know, I know, AMOS has fully supported Sound Tracker 'MOD' format music files ever since Europress released AMOS Classic's version

CHAOS RULES OK!

Possibly one of the most fascinating areas of Craft is its Fractal graphics commands which provide AMOS with all that is needed to generate impressive Mandelbrot and Julia sets along with those produced by commercial fractal programs such as Fractal Pro II. So let's take a look at a few of the more important commands that you should be aware of. Once again, the best way to get to grips with these commands is to experiment with the demonstration programs you'll find in the Craft Extras disk.

FR POSITION X,Y

The 'FR Position' command defines the geometric co-ordinates of the upper left hand corner of the screen. To get the fractal generation working as fast as possible, however, the values that you pass must be multiplied by 8192 (don't ask me why - it seems that the programmer did find some new system that starts its hell out at 8000! Mandelbrot's algorithm!). The Mandelbrot set lies within the area -2.06254 and -1.15474, 1.15474 and 1.15474, however, must always lie approximately in the middle of the screen. If you set X to -10000 and Y to 12000 and use a 'STEP' value of 100 (we'll be coming to 'STEP' values next) you'll be able to adequately display any set on a standard 320 by 256 pixel screen.

FR STEP X,Y

This command defines the scale (on the 'zoom level') of the screen when the fractal

is generated on both the 'X' and 'Y' and possible values range from 1 to 1624 with the larger values covering a wider area of the set. A value of one will give the maximum possible zoom level. The scale level is specified separately for the 'X' and 'Y' axis to allow you to tailor the aspect ratio to suit the screen that the fractal is being displayed within.

FR WINDOW SCREEN (X1,Y1,WIDTH,HEIGHT)

This command lets you specify which screen the fractal is drawn into and both its position and size of the fractal 'window' (the area of the screen which the fractal will be drawn into). If you simply pass the screen as 1 (the screen without any further parameters) the fractal will fill the entire screen. The 'X', 'Y', 'WIDTH' and 'HEIGHT' parameters let you specify a portion of screen with the next thing left along

FR COLOUR INDEX COLOUR

This command defines which colour is drawn for a particular iteration. The 'INDEX' parameter defines the iteration number and the 'COLOUR' parameter defines the colour register which will be used for that particular iteration.

FR MANDELORBIT ITERATIONS

Finally, we have the 'FR Mandelorbit' command, but not surprisingly, is that all important command that actually generates your fractal. The 'ITERATIONS' parameter sets the number of iterations that the calculation uses.


Fractal graphics are a bit too complicated to explain in-depth, but a brief breakdown of Craft's fractal commands can be found in the box elsewhere within these pages.

TURTLE GRAPHICS

If you didn't spend your entire school life skiving off behind the bike sheds with Flosa Smith from the 5th form, then you probably remember a rather archaic language called 'Logo' that was used within schools to teach the basics of computer programming.

Although Logo was hardly a language of any great importance, it did offer one feature that is still finding favour - Turtle graphics. The basic idea behind Turtle graphics is that you program an invisible 'turtle' to draw images on the screen by passing it a list of instructions - move to position 100,100, rotate 90 degrees and then draw a line 20 units long etc.

As you can see the major difference between Turtle graphics and conventional graphics commands is that Turtle graphics use a system that makes every command operate RELATIVE to the last command.

That's all we have space for - time to go off and experiment with all that Craft has to offer. 



Need a check program for your Amiga? This craft is being generated in realtime using nothing more than turtle graphics!

breaks down on the great things that Craft has to offer:

COLORS

Craft's strongest area has to be its impressive selection of colour palette handling commands.

These commands are certainly a



Another impressive feature of Craft is its powerful directory handling commands which are an added 'plus' on top of all the commands that Craft has to offer.



Craft adds many operating system facility features to AMOS including the ability to read the current preference settings into AMOS.

134 but Craft's audio commands are a cut above the rest. Unlike Europress' own attempt at a Sound Tracker player, Craft's audio commands can play both sound samples AND Sound Tracker modules simultaneously - try doing that with your copy of AMOS Professional!

FRactal GRAPHICS

One of the most impressive aspects of Craft is its support for fractal graphics in the shape of Mandelbrot and Julia sets. I'm sure you've seen the results of this fascinating area of computing on the album covers of such bands as Insane Clapnets.

For more information on these and other features of Craft, see the

AMOS CRAFT EXTENSION

AMOS CRAFT EXTENSION

Okay, so this isn't just a quite a Campagnone's online font but it's a pretty damned close - what's more, it was produced entirely using turtle graphics.

RETURN TO THE GOLDEN AGE OF BUCCANEERING

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CRAFT

BLACK LEGEND

SPECIAL OFFERS

If you want to take your CRAFT for AMOS coverdisk to its full and maximum potential and unleash the massive powers within, why not purchase the original program's manual at the special price of just £9.99?

CRAFT will give AMOS possibilities and commands that up till now you could only have dreamed of. It will shortly become an integral extension to AMOS and you'll wonder how you ever lived without it!

Here's a brief selection of the doors CRAFT will open for both beginner and expert with its over 160 new instructions and functions: • Colour handling including multi-palette banks and colour spreading • Requesters • Audio system for Sound and ProTracker music • Fractals • Julia and Mandelbrot at a speed previously exclusive to the Amiga • Turbographix • A comprehensively written 55-page manual will give you all the information needed on each command and include many useful examples • A manual as easy to use thanks to its good layout and the inclusion of a helpful glossary

The handbook is written both for beginners and experienced alike and also offers interesting background information on subjects such as Mandelbrot and Julia fractals. • If you want to get the most out of your coverdisk (and this is then there's no time to waste - fit out the order below and return it without delay!

We have another special offer for CU AMIGA AMOS enthusiasts. Now that you have read about and been able to try CRAFT for AMOS, we can offer you the CRAFT for AMOS (it usually sells in shops for £25.99). And this is a free budget game from the Legend label value.

- the boxed version of CRAFT for AMOS
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AMIGA
All Models

AMOS





YOUR QUICK START GUIDE TO LOADING DISK 77

This month, loading your disk is a very simple task - all you do is put the disk in your Amiga and switch the machine on. Simple.

First of all you should read the K240 preview on page 63 because you'll need as much background information as you can get before you consider tackling our enormous K240 playable demo. Once you've done that you can begin. Ready? Then let's start.

So what do you actually have to do? Well, you have a single asteroid and a whopping great chunk of money, and so does the alien you're up against.

All you need to do is equip your asteroid sufficiently and wait for the enemy to turn up. Before you hit back and assume that there isn't much to do, take a quick look over the multitude of menus you have to play with.

Remember, this game isn't just about war, you've got an entire colony to play with, and half the fun is making sure that the colony is thriving before you start worrying about the opposing ships. Incidentally, they're looking for you too, and chances are they'll find you first!

There's a lot of game here. K240 has a wealth of options and menus but the nice thing about it is that you can pick it up with almost no instruction.

This window shows you the various buildings you can construct from, along with their costs.



COVERDISK 77



Utopia was a big, big game. Yet it wasn't big enough for Gremlin Graphics. They've gone further. They've left the ground and shot off into space. Far into space. All the way, in fact, to sector...

This is the view you'll spend most of your time with. As you play the game, you'll get to recognise all the different buildings.

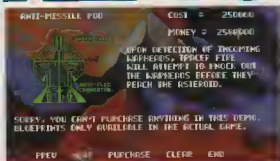
tion of all, and be completely in control in no time at all.

Just to get you going, though, here are a few pointers on what you should be doing throughout.

BASIC CONTROLS

The game is controlled with the mouse. As a rule, the right mouse button brings up a sub menu and the left mouse button selects an option or builds on empty land.

If you find you are using the same options over and over again, and don't want to keep working through the menus, then holding down the left mouse button for a second or two over the menu option extracts the button and places it on the side of the screen, where you can reach it much more quickly and easily. At any point, to leave a menu or confirm an action, click on the Return icon, which is always found in the bottom right of the current window.



You can't actually buy anything from this screen in our demo, but you can at least appreciate the joys of catalogue shopping. A sort of Interplanetary Argos really!

BUILDING

There are two ways of selecting the building you want. The first is to bring up the building menu and flick through the choices as they are shown. This is ideal for beginners to the game, as it tells them exactly what each building does and how much it costs to build.

The other way is to click on the number icon in the bottom right of the display, which allows you to flick through the various monoliths.

THE VIEWS

There are essentially two different views of an asteroidoid that you need to know about. One is the close-up view, which is where you are dealing only with a particular asteroid (this is the view you start with), and the other is the sector view, which

shows you all the asteroids you have currently detected. In this mode, clicking on other asteroids selects them, allowing you to view and build on them.

ATTACKING

In our demo, you start with a set number of craft and missiles. To launch either in an attack select the appropriate icon and then select the destination when asked. To choose which craft or missile to use, bring up the inventory screen (which appears when either missiles or spacecraft are selected) and then click with the right mouse button in the box next to the name you want. K240 will do the rest.

K240 is a huge game and can seem a little bewildering at first, but as you experiment and play with it, everything will become clear.

Have fun, and watch out for those aliens! **CD**

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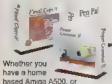
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The most popular entry level Word Processor in the UK with a unique built-in Database. Pen Pal has become the best selling program of its type. Although the features are extensive the program remains simple to use and one reviewer commented "there is little to fault Pen Pal, it deserves to do well!" A comprehensive easy to understand manual (over 250 pages) is supplied and Pen Pal will run on any Amiga that has a minimum of 1Mb available free memory.

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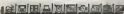
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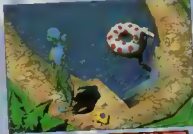
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Multimedia

Tired of all this hot air about so-called "multimedia"?

Want to try it out for yourself? Good - it's about time, so let CU AMIGA guide you through the hypertext maze and interactive jungle, with the definitive guide to creating your own multimedia masterpiece.

Multimedia is one of those magic terms that has yet to be bed down to a definitive meaning. But if any computer deserves the title of Multimedia Workstation, the Amiga must surely be it. No other micro can combine sound, graphics, animation and text so effortlessly. Even a standard out-of-the-box A1200 is capable of easily out-performing a PC, and a fully-equipped Amiga 4000 can be said to be state of the art.

The success of the Interchangeable File Format or IFF standard means that data can be freely shared between programs. Only on the Amiga can you be sure that an image created with a scanner will load directly into any graphics program. This ability to share data is taken a giant leap further with ARexx - the Amiga's own inter-process communication language. With ARexx any program can communicate with any other. So for example, a multimedia application can call on the skills of a dedicated stand-alone animation or sound playback program.

But what exactly is a multimedia application, and how would you go about writing one? Read on to find out more.

the Amiga



AREXX THE MISSING LINK

The missing link behind Amiga's multimedia is **AREXX**—the microcomputer's communications language. Getting to know **AREXX** can pay off in many ways, and it is essential to harness the power of the Amiga.

If you're averse to programming, **AREXX** adds new features to your Amiga. For example, *The One Stop Music Shop* game (from the Amiga) comes with an **AREXX** command-line player. Using **CanDo**, **HyperCard** or most other multimedia systems, an **AREXX** command can be used to play the video, which is usually multi-tasking in the background.

The same principle can be used to add animation, and affects even control over external video recorders and laserdisc players.

THE ABC OF DIY

Any program which includes pictures, sounds, text and information can be said to make use of multimedia—and this leaves rather a large number of applications open, from games to education to dedicated information systems in shopping centres or offices.

A typical multimedia application is rather like a book that is filled with different pages of text and sound. There is a graphic adventure program. Each game location can be considered as a separate page, and each page can contain a picture, some text and perhaps even some sound and animation.

By choosing from a list of options, the reader of the book can choose which page to go to next. In the case of the game, this may depend on how well the reader is doing—if he or she has just fallen down—50 foot well, the page would most likely contain the message "You are dead—please try again".

However, in a multimedia Point of Information system, (POI) system, the user can select which items of information they wish to see. The pages can contain text or pictures and a narration can be triggered to inform the user or ask them to continue.

WHAT YOU NEED

Before you start writing your own application, you'll need several things. First of all, you'll need a suitable authoring program.

There are many dedicated packages to choose from, but even a handwriting language like **AMOS** is capable of doing the job.

As long as the language can display pictures and text, play samples and accept input it will do the job.



Re-booting an Amiga and monitor in a smart new virtual prototyping box may be necessary. This approach offers the possibility of simplifying the keyboard to a set of coloured switches.

Next on the list is a way of getting your desired pictures into Amiga format and displaying them. There are many different pieces of hardware around that will do this, and we'll be taking a look at the most interesting later on.

Sound is also an important issue, and again we've looked at what's currently hot in audio hardware.

Of course, the public domain libraries are full of data cluttered with pictures and sound samples, so to get started you won't even have to spend more than the price of a blank disk.

MEMORY AND STORAGE

When you need access to lots of graphics and sound, you'll soon find that even the highest of high density floppy disks aren't men enough for the task. When the graphics are true-colour 24-bit, and the sound is CD-quality 16-bit, the bits soon rack up and occasionally even a hard disk isn't big enough.

Imagine you are authoring a multimedia system for the local tourist board. You find that you'll be using about 50 hi-res, interleaved HAMB pictures—already that's potentially over 10Mb of storage space. Add another few meg for a MED sound track and the control program and you've easily filled a 20Mb drive.

Moving video animations and sound will multiply this amount of storage by a factor of ten and then you probably might find the system is

un-economic. What if the drive fails? How many spare 200Mb hard drives have you got?

The answer could well be CD-ROM. At the moment the cost of creating a one-off CD is still rather expensive, but you can bet that the success of the CD32 and cousins will push the prices down.

If you do get your system onto CD it makes multiple platforms very easy to make—and it means you only need one CD32 player for video, computer graphics and CD-quality sound.

MOVING VIDEO

Still graphics are all very well, but for true "interactive television" those pictures are going to have to move.

At the simplest level, normal IFF animations can be very impressive. As long as the number of colours is kept low, any Amiga can animate quickly enough to look impressive.

Commercial packages such as *Glenn*, *Magic Lantern* or shareware programs like *MovieMaker* are **AREXX** compatible, and so can be used by the majority of authoring systems.

Playing back digital video is a lot more difficult. There are two problems: the first is the amount of space a video sequence will take up. Each frame of VHS quality video could be a megabyte big, and when you multiply that by 25 frames a second CD-ROM is the only viable solution.

The next problem is speed—if

you can't keep the data coming in fast enough the result can be horribly jerky.

One solution is to compress the data to reduce both storage and transfer speed requirements, and this is exactly what the MPEG standard does. Video is stored in compressed format, and then custom chips decompress it for display on-screen.

There are a few MPEG cards appearing on the market, but at the moment many seem to be beyond the reach of most home users.

There is a sneaky way around this problem however—don't use full-screen video. In most cases it is completely unwarranted anyway.

Only the top right corner of the display will actually need updating at speed, which reduces by a quarter the data required.

Reducing the colour requirements as well will mean that standard ANIM files and players can cope too.

Capturing the data requires extra hardware, although this needn't necessarily be a ludicrous expense. *MacroSystems* have developed a version of their superb VLA6 video digitiser that will grab a sequence of video by making several passes of the original source. It also links with the *Tocatta* soundcard for a complete audio/visual system, costing about £800. *MacroSystems* are also working on a dedicated motion capturing system, and we hope to bring you details on that when it is announced.

For the more budget minded Amiga owner, the *VideoMaster* system from *Microdual/HitsSoft* can be overlooked. It may look like a toy, but it can capture video and sound at 25 frames per second—see the full review on page 110.

MAKING YOUR OWN HARDWARE

If your multimedia system is to be used in a professional environment, it may require a completely new housing.

Building a plastic cabinet without accurate isn't easy, the hardest part in ensuring the drive sufficient ventilation. Using coloured sandwich board it is a standard keyboard is a real task. In fact, in some cases it is a real task.

The electronic board such as *Immaculate* is a relatively easy—simply wire up the switches to the board (or stick a switch).

Most software can accept joystick inputs which means you won't need to write a special **AREXX** handler.

a wonderland

» You might like what you see here, and decide what you really want to do is to write your own multimedia application. The only problem is you're stuck for ideas - so what do you do?

WHAT TO DO?

Firstly, you might like to try looking around your local area. Many shopping centres are starting to place interactive terminals in large shopping malls. Perhaps you could create one on a more local level - in your Post Office for example.

If you would rather stick with less commercial aspects, take a look in the PD libraries. There are plenty of educational programs featuring digitised pictures, text and sound - could you do better?

Or how about creating a graphics based adventure program based on your local area, featuring your friends? All you need is access to a scanner, a video-camera and digitiser and you, family can stay in their own Zork adventure (or something). If you don't have a digitiser, check out the advertisements in CU AMIGA. Some so all you need to do is send off your photographs, and get a disk of IFF pictures in return.

GET STARTED

Whether your multimedia program is going to be a game or a serious money-making scheme however, the most important stage in the development cycle is planning. Jumping straight in might be fun, but it will only result in total chaos as you try and work out exactly what is going on. Nothing is more annoying to an end user than a lack of consistency or the feeling that they are not really controlling what is going on.

Spend as long as you deem planning your system. Start globally, looking at the system as a whole and then break it down into chunks. Fill pages of paper with scribbles until you know exactly what your system is doing.

Early on in the process you will have to fix the hardware aspects of your design. Will the user be running the application on their own Amiga? Will a stand-alone terminal be used? Is it possible to use an external video or sound source? Where will the system be situated - will it need to be

Authoring an

HELPFUL INDEX

This screen is fitted for those who have already used the system before. They know they've seen something useful, but they can't quite remember where. In this situation the four buttons can become a hindrance - the user would really like a keyword search. Instead we offer a search through a list of pictures. A new tune plays here to make whirring away the time looking for the right word a little less tedious.

INDEX

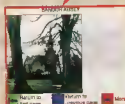


PLACES TO GO

The Places of Interest display allows the user to launch off and explore the multimedia database. Each button will lead to a sequence of different images, although there is also a 'back to the start' option on each.

It is important to make even plain menu displays like this one as interesting as possible. The legends on the buttons are an attempt to build a feeling for the video recorder style control of the program.

Places of Interest



Bangor Abbey

Digging up information for places such as Bangor Abbey was remarkably easy, and took less than an afternoon in the local library. However, it isn't always that easy. To get information for your system you might have to have several meetings with the prospective customer and be prepared to do a lot of back work and leg work to find out all the necessary information that they will require.



Shopping

Here is an interesting idea - why not try to sell advertising space in your multimedia system? This could help fund your venture, and help you get that state-of-the-art equipment that you've always been longing for. Local shops and premises might be willing to sponsor your development costs in exchange for a big close-up photograph and sampled jingle.



Marina

The image is displayed along with some Beagull brand samples taken from an old BBC sound effects record. It illustrates a new concept of printed matter - many a user will want a permanent copy of the information, and by pressing the yellow button a small text file is sent to an infra-red led bubble printer next to the computer system. The weather, however, did a bit to help the price.

m application

Help!

Welcome to this computerized information system.

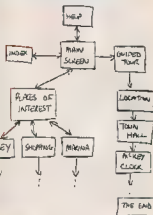
It has been designed to be easy to use.



Please press the Red Button to continue...

A lot of users will never have seen a system like this before, so it's important to offer guidelines. Many people will be afraid that pressing the wrong button at the wrong time will break something, so it's important that they are reassured. Keep text simple. This screen also triggers a section of simplified narration to convince the user they have nothing to worry about, and also provide instructions quickly.

TOURIST INFORMATION SYSTEM



This is one of the more interesting screens the user can take. It launches a part of the program that displays a continuous presentation. New images are accompanied by a full narration, but must be played in the order.

Grow a box for each different display. The arrows indicate the flow of control backwards and forwards between different pages in the Hyperlink.

Welcome to.

BANGOR

Help!

Places of Interest

Guided Tour

Index

Please press the button corresponding to your choice.

This is the most important screen of the entire project, as it will be the first display a user will see. It has to be looking, look easy to use and avoid all types of jargon. It cannot be too simple, or it won't be used.

A tranquil tone plays whilst this screen is displayed, preferably one which won't drive a novice who has to listen to it a lot of times.

There are four options, one for each colour-coded switch on the terminal. The first leads to a Help screen for the screen. The second provides a Guided Tour - notice how the estimated time is given. The third will quickly produce a list of interesting places, and the last offers a way of finding specific information quickly.



Cu Down N Ireland

Using the various areas offered by the authoring software, a really smart near-TV quality programme can be produced. The final image processed (digitized picture through ADPCM) makes a perfect backdrop for text.



As the first part of the guided tour, it's important to set the scene before launching into any detailed descriptions. Notice the Stop and Pause buttons which can restart or temporarily freeze the current action.



For this rather smart-looking building, regular music is played via a MIDI module and the sound card is used to replay a brief history of the building. Speech comes from a high-quality (not a stereo) source, so it can be on for several minutes as different views of the building are displayed.



This section introduces a brief section of moving video. After the first colour picture has been displayed, a short macro-macro animation shows passers-by and pigeons walking around the clock. Then a digitizer like Viewfinder will produce very pleasing results.

vandal or weather proof? What sort of interface will the user be presented with? These are all important questions which shape your finished system.

USER INTERFACE

When designing a user interface, try to keep in mind as many different people as possible. Not everyone is as expert as the Amiga operating system as you. In fact, your system could be the first computer a person has ever decided to use.

Think of the technophobic housewife, the old-aged pensioner, the cocky computer literate school kid and the bored IT professional who wants information in a hurry. Your software may have to cater for all these people. Try not to use computer-related terms (even phrases such as 'Hit Return' can stump many), but above all avoid being patronising.

If you're building a stand-alone system, try to use buttons which are colour-coded and can be placed beside the main monitor display. On a home system, make good use of the mouse and normal Amiga keyboard shortcuts.

Since most people know how to use a video recorder, a favourite interface is based loosely on this sort of control. A 'Play' button can bring you to the next page, 'Pause' will halt the proceedings and 'Stop' can terminate the entire process. If you use icons, for heaven's sake make them understandable. Use big, bold colours and test them by showing them to someone else.

INFORMATION ENGINEERING

Getting hold of information in the first place is an entire discipline in itself.

The End



If the user has reached this far, they deserve some kind of reward. It is important that you manage to get this far in order to test the system. There may be thousands of different ways of breaking the system, but it's up to you to ensure none of them will reach the computer and leave the same image on the monitor for days at a time.

To create a theoretical tourist information system, I paid a visit to the local library and bought a bunch of leaflets. These contain more background information than I could possibly use, and provided a whole host of ideas.

The next task was to pick a nice sunny day and travel around town with my trusty 35mm camera. I was planning to scan the photographs after developing and printing, but if I had managed to keep hold of that Canon still video camera that I had a year ago I would have used that instead, most likely.

Sound was proving to be a problem, but I decided that as this system was going to be used by ordinary members of the public that as much narration as possible was required. This implies quite a large hard drive, and some direct from disk sample replay software.

Getting an introductory jingle and some tunes was a matter of asking a musically talented friend to create some MED modules. He sampled a MIDI module for the best quality sound.

For sound effects, I looked through some old record shops until

I found the old BBC Audio Effects album I was looking for. I had decided early on to use CanDo, because as the name suggests I find it can do just about everything, and still manage to produce a stand-alone program.

Once you have a few hours experience with CanDo, each page of the system takes only minutes to produce. Items such as buttons can be easily duplicated, although the most time consuming part of the process was getting the graphics and sound just right.

When all the software was work-

ing, it was time to build a dedicated cabinet. I used some illuminated arcade game style switches (by Maplin Electronics) and placed them as close to the monitor as I could. A standard Philips/Commodore 1084 monitor was more than adequate, as all the interlaced pictures I was going to display came from real digitised sources, which reduces flicker to almost negligible amounts.

The stereo sound from the monitor meant I didn't need an external audio amplifier. After extensive testing it was time to try and sell my system - but that's another story!

Software reviews

So now you know how to create your own multimedia products, it's time to look at the available software which will help you complete the job.

CANDO2

One of the first and still one of the best authoring programs is CanDo from Inprotronics. This has to be one of the most underrated Amiga programs ever - hardly anyone seems to realise that you can probably do almost anything with CanDo.



Using CanDo to create the Tourist Information system was quite straightforward. The buttons were actually part of the screen image to keep palette match problems at bay. Overlaying areas of CanDo's "shape only" buttons ensured they still did something when they were clicked (when I was testing it, in the finished system the joystick racing routines were used to scan the extra switches connected to the second mouse port).

Programs or decks consist of special cards. Each card can be a window or a screen with or without an IFF picture backdrop. AGA images are now fully supported in the latest versions.

On the card you can place animations, buttons, text, lists of items, pull-down menus - just about everything you might need. You then write scripts (by pointing and clicking, or directly with a text editor) to define what happens whenever a particular action is taken. For example, a button may inform CanDo to display a new Card or play a sound sample - or both.

Other actions are handled automatically, so for example inserting a new floppy disk can be detected. There is even a timer to launch specific scripts at specific times. Input support is extensive as is the ARos interface for linking CanDo decks with other programs.

CanDo is my multimedia tool of choice. It might not be lightning fast, but it does almost everything I could possibly need.

Product: CanDo 2.5

Price: £149.95

Availability: Meridian Software, Tel: 081 543 3500

HELM

Helm is a relatively new multimedia authoring program, that seems to be a cross between CanDo and HyperBook. It offers a huge range of options including remote CDTV control and AGA graphics support. Whilst avoiding the multiple sliding screens of CanDo to provide a slightly faster user-interface.

It has special features dedicated to creating hypertext documents, and remembers these text files; can now also include moving graphics and sound. Creating pictures is made a lot simpler by the inclusion of a dedicated drawing program, so you don't have to keep flipping back to Deluxe Paint or whatever.

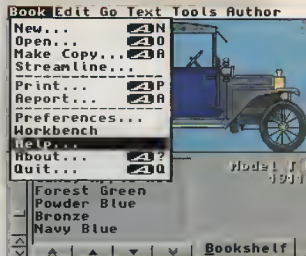
Best of all is the freely distributable browser program which means you can share your work with anyone who has an Amiga.

If you wish HyperBook had been updated, then you'll be pleased to know that it has. It's just changed its name to Helm in the process.

Product: Helm

Price: £99.95

Availability: Meridian Software, Tel: 081 543 3500



The familiar Amiga DOE gadgets and requesters make Helm an easy program to use. Create hypertext instruction manuals in minutes and send them to all your friends with this freely distributable browser program.



GOT WAR

We are recognised in the Amiga community as one of the leading specialists in Hard Drives and Mass Data Storage.

AMIGA A40DD/D40

The flagship of the Commodore Amiga range. Based around the 68040 processor. Comes with a Hard Drive, 2+4 RAM and WB 3.0.

85 Mb version - £1899	340Mb version - £2069
130Mb version - £1919	426Mb version - £2149
200Mb version - £1939	540Mb version - £2299
250Mb version - £1979	

AMIGA A40DD/05D

The same specifications as it's big brother but designed around the 68030 processor. The A4000/030 comes with a Hard Drive, 1+1 RAM and WB 3.0.

(FOR 2+4 PLEASE ADD £69)

85 Mb version - £899	340Mb version - £1099
130Mb version - £969	426Mb version - £1199
200Mb version - £999	540Mb version - £1299
250Mb version - £1039	

AMIGA A1200

The A1200 sports many of the features of the A4000 series. Based around the 68020 processor with 8Mb of RAM and WB 3.0 as standard. A full range of Hard Drives are also available for the A1200.

Basic A1200 - £289	120Mb H.D version - £494
40Mb H.D version - £308	170Mb H.D version - £528
60Mb H.D version - £445	200Mb H.D version - £548
85Mb H.D version - £468	256Mb H.D version - £578



DESKTOP DYNAMITE PACK

The desktop Dynamite Pack contains 5 pieces of software written specifically for the AGA chipset, which includes DpaintAGA, WordworthAGA, Oscar and other with a total street value of over £300. (PLEASE ADD £40 FOR DTD PACK)

GRAPHICS AND VIDEO

REAL3D 2	£378.50
ART DEPT PRO	£134.99
MORPH PLUS	£136.99
DPaint 4 AGA	£ 66.00
DPaint 4	£ 59.99
SCENERY ANIMATOR 4	£ 54.99
VISTA PRO 3	£ 44.99
MAKE PATH	£ 23.99
TERRAFORM	£ 23.99
SCALA MM210	£ P.O.A
SCALA MM300	£ P.O.A

UTILITIES

X-COPY PRO	£ 31.99
GB ROUTE PLUS	£ 32.99
LATTICE C V6.1	£259.99
DIRECTORY OPUS	£ 46.50
VIDEO BACKUP SVSTEM	£ 49.95
QUARTERBACK TOOLS	£ 47.50
DEV PACK 3	£ 53.99
VIDI AMIGA 12	£ 81.95
DISTANT SUNS V4.2	£ 39.99

MUSIC

STEREO MASTER	£ 29.99
BARB & PIPES PRO	£215.99
TECHNOSOUND TURBO	£ 58.50

WORD PROCESSOR & DTP

WORDWORTH 2	£78.99
FINAL COPY 2	£74.99
PENPAL	£28.95
PAGESETTER 3	£43.99
PRO DRAW V3.0	£64.99
PRO PAGE V4.0	£89.99

GAMES

CIVILISATION AGA	£ 39.00
CIVILISATION AGA UPGRADE	£ 19.00
(SEND YOUR DISKS AND DETAILS)	

PAINTERS

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CITIZEN 240	£212.00
CITIZEN 240C	£234.00
PANASONIC	
KCP 2123 COLOUR	£210.00
10CP 2023	£178.00
HEWLETT PACKARD	
HP 500C	£290.00
HP 510	£246.00
HP 550C	£490.00

DEMON



OVERDRIVE 33

These external hard drives come in an ABS box styled to match the Amiga A1200. They plug in via the PCMCIA slot and include an external PSU so as not to invalidate your Commodore warranty. Ultra-fast

transfer rates of up to 2Mb/sec. Full 1 year warranty, all the software needed to mount and configure the drive is included.

30Mb version - £299	340Mb version - £549
90Mb version - £349	486Mb version - £549
120Mb version - £399	540Mb version - £699

1200 UPGRADES

SCSI/RAM BOARD

This board is user fittable via the trapdoor expansion slot of the A1200. It has slots for up to 128Mb of 32bit RAM, a maths co-pro and includes a SCSI interface as standard.

NO FPU	£179.00
RAM/33MHz FPU	£349.00
CABLE KIT	£ 59.00

A1230 BOARD

A higher quality trapdoor expansion for the A1200. It features a 68030 processor as standard and has slots for a maths co-pro and up to 8Mb of 32bit RAM.

NO FPU	£269.00
RAM/40MHz FPU	£439.00

ACCESSORIES

32MHz 68682 FPU	£ 99.00
33MHz 68682 FPU	£129.00
32bit RAM	£ 64.00
32bit RAM	£153.00

RAM BOARD

This budget expansion board fits via the trapdoor. It has 2x32bit SIMM sockets for up to 8Mb of memory, a 16MHz 68681 FPU, and a battery backed clock fitted as standard.

with 0Mb RAM/68681	£ 99.00
with 1Mb RAM/68681	£129.00
with 4Mb RAM/68681	£229.00

IDE INTERNAL HARD DRIVE KITS

These kits come complete with screws, instructions and all the software necessary to prep and configure the drive.

40Mb - £139	60Mb - £119	80Mb - £179
120Mb - £279	209Mb - £399	

A4000 UPGRADES

PHOTON (FOR A4000/030)

This board will transform an Amiga A4000/030 into a fully fledged 040. It features a 040 CPU module with a MMU and a built-in FPU running at 25MHz.

PHOTON UPGRADE £699

HELIFIRE (FOR A4000/030)

This is a replacement CPU board for the A4000/030. It features a 50 MHz clock speed, a built-in MMU and a 50 MHz 68682 FPU. Your 030 will only be 10% slower than an 040 during most operations.

HELIFIRE UPGRADE £299

DHB 128

The DHB 128 is a 0 wait state memory expansion board for the A4000 series. It has slots for up to 128Mb of 32bit RAM using SIMMS of any size. It is a true ZORRO 3 card which makes for a very fast board.

DHB BOARD (BLANK) £269 (See chips for memory)

HARD DRIVES (A1200 & A4000)

These Hard Drives can be fitted at any time by us (FOR THE A1200) or the end-user. All the necessary software is included.

85Mb - £129.00	330Mb - £299.00
130Mb - £149.00	486Mb - £369.00
200Mb - £199.00	540Mb - £399.00
250Mb - £249.00	

FITTING FEE FOR A1200 £ 29.00

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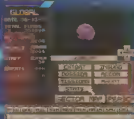
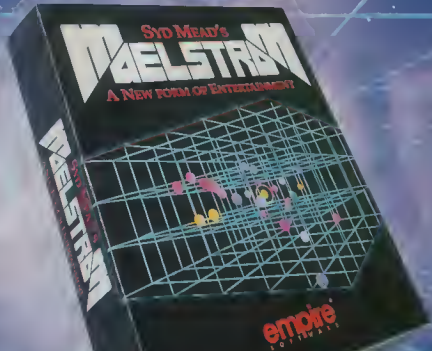
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MEDIAPOINT

Aimed squarely as competition for *Scala*, *MediaPoint* does pretty well for itself. It was written by the same people who brought us *Real 3D*, and received a strong review in the January 1994 issue.

As *Scala*, it uses the same sort of pinky-linc screen with point and click event bars. Animations, sound and AReox messages can all be produced depending on input or pre set times. The extensive set of example image and sound files which come with *MediaPoint* will mean you can probably create hell a dozen applications before you need to buy a scanner or digitiser. Also like *Scala*, *MediaPoint* is rather expensive and worse still you may find you have to pay a royalty or buy a license to use it on a stand-alone terminal!

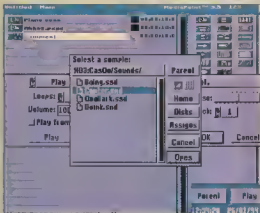
Product: *MediaPoint*

Price: £399.95

Availability: Mandan Software Tel: 081 543 3500



MediaPoint can cope with AGA pictures, and then overlay its own text and gadget devices. The nice when well added polished Swiss to my presentation.



Sound modules are supported, although not those created by Atari. Thankfully both *MediaPoint* and *NECDisplay* take AReox, so it is not lost.



SCALA

You're probably sick of *Scala*, aren't you? Surely not! Here you cry. If last month's extravaganza wasn't enough for you, here's a brief re-cap. *Scala* is the multimedia tool that the professionals use. It supports almost everything under the sun, and is in use all over the world. Even IBM use it for their presentations.

If you want to know more, either look at last month's issue, watch cable TV in the States, book into a Danish hotel or buy a McDonalds.

Product: *SCALA MM300*

Price: £529.99

Availability: *Scala UK Ltd*, Tel: 0920 444294

HYPERBOOK

HyperBook was developed by GoldDisk, who are probably better known for their DTP software rather than their multimedia software. This program manages to combine ease of use with an incredibly powerful AReox interface. The interface is needed because *HyperBook* can't do a great deal by itself.



even the animation support isn't up to much. In its favour is a very low price, an excellent manual and a really classy feel. Unfortunately there are problems using *HyperBook* with Workbench 3 machines, and there is no AGA support. Until some upgrades come along, this is probably one to avoid.

Product: *HyperBook*

Price: Original price £70. However, it can now be found in various shops for a lot less.

Availability: *Gold Disk* Tel: 0101 416 602400 or shop around in the UK

AMIGA GUIDE

Commodore don't always get things right – but occasionally they come up with some blunders, of which *Amiga Guide* is one. It's a hypertext system, that should relegate all those nesty scrolling "More" variants to the trash can. An *Amiga Guide* document looks much like any other text file, except for one or two little extra comments.

However, when used with the *Amiga Guide* program these comments trigger all sorts of magic. For starters, you can control text colour and style, but you can also create "hyperlinks" to other pages in the document.

Click on an outlined word, and you immediately get brought to a detailed explanation. Click on the gidgets at the top of the screen and you



Anything you get for free is worth what you pay for it, someone once said. Not so *Amiga Guide*, the off-the-shelf Hypertext system from Commodore. Same on-line magazine even use it to distribute their manuals.

can return. It's dead easy to use, and also very easy to write your own documents.

The best thing is that it's free – yup, the entire *Amiga Guide* environment is available for now! I got mine with the official *Commodore Native Developer Kit 3.0*, but the file is freely distributable so ask your favourite PD library for a copy.

Product: *Amiga Guide*

Price: Free

Availability: 17 Bit Software Tel: 0924 366 962

AMOS

The first of the BASIC language systems covered, AMOS has been around a long time now. Apart from anything else this means it is both cheap and reliable, and has also amassed a huge following with various clubs and newsletters.

As you would expect from a language primarily designed for writing arcade games, AMOS is fast and has lots of support for IFF sounds and images.

Unfortunately the AGA modes aren't supported, although there should be some third party extensions to plug the gaps.

For multimedia applications, the Professional version of AMOS is required, as it offers standard requests for better animation support and ARexx.

My main reasons for not liking it much are purely based on the fact that AMOS doesn't integrate itself with the Amiga operating system very well.

Its problem is that it just sort of sits on top of everything and bores the rest of the system around.

So remember to get the compiler if you need stand-alone code.

Product: *AMOS Professional*

Price: £49.95 (and £34.95 for compiler)

Availability: EnroPress Software, Tel: 0525 859333



BLITZBASIC 2

Is this the new crown prince of Amiga BASIC programs? It certainly looks as though AMOS has had its day, although there will be plenty of die-hard users who won't admit it.

Blitz is a cooking adaptation of BASIC, souped up with total control over the Amiga hardware and one of the latest BASIC complete event seen.

It provides plenty of support for IFF screens and sounds, and like AMOS it has an open architecture which allows third party extensions – like 3D and AGA graphics – to be added later.

Again, *Blitz* is primarily for writing games. But don't let that stop you. Knock up a few text-handling routines and a nice picture loader and you have the heart of your own multimedia system. Programs compile into stand-alone lumps of code which takes all the headaches out of distribution.

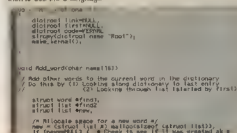
Product: *BlitzBasic2*

Price: £69.95

Availability: Mundan Software Tel: 081 543 3600

LATTICE C

The ultimate method of creating a multimedia system is to write the entire thing from scratch, and there is no better way to write a complicated program than to use the C language.



Currently *Lattice/SAS C* is the Amiga compiler of choice, although it has to be said that the public domain and shareware offerings are getting pretty close. *DICE* in particular is hot stuff, although you will have to remember to buy the Commodore include datafiles before you can do anything useful.

The benefits of writing your own system are obvious – it will do exactly what you want it to, and you have total ownership of the copyright. If it was any good, you could even sell the system yourself! Writing in C also means your code is portable, so adapting it to run on PCs or Macs might bring even more fame.

The disadvantages are also obvious – it's a blooming hard work. You'll need to write your own image display code, your own animation code and your own sound management code.

You'll have to cope with keyboard and mouse input, time scheduling, ARexx ports, editors and above all, it will have to be totally reliable. Working alone, this could easily take six months to complete – no mean task.

Product: *Lattice/SAS C v6*

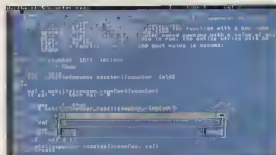
Price: £255

Availability: HiSoft, Tel: 0525 718161

» AREXX

Believe it or not, but it is possible to write an entire application using AREXX. The only catch is that you'll need standalone programs to display graphics, animations and so on. The good news is that all you require is already written and in the realm of public domain and shareware.

Graphics can be handled with ViewTalk, for although VT doesn't itself have an AREXX port (shame) it can be driven from the CLI/SHELL, which AREXX is



more than capable of doing. Likewise there are dozens of IFF-sample playback programs around, so linking the entire lot together is only a matter of chaining out the relevant AREXX script.

There is a major problem, it's probably one of speed. AREXX is an interpreted language and therefore not the fastest. It would also be a difficult task indeed to prevent glitches as the various programs are called, and you might find the Workbench display keeps popping to the front – not always a very pleasant experience.

If you don't have an A4000 you will need to invest in a good tutorial work, of which there are now several. Product: AREXX. Price: free with all new Amigas. Availability: Commodore. Tel: 0628 770086.

THANKS TO...

Martin Lowe (Amiga Centre Services) for ideas and support. Al. Andy Leasing (Silicon) for keeping us on our toes. Marcus Maslin and Chris Campbell for MIDW enjoyment and being the best hosts. Steve, Bigger Town Casualty for not losing legal action... yet.

COPYRIGHT PROBLEMS!

You might be worried about using a particular sound sample or photograph, but news just in from the States presents a whole new problem: the concept of Multimedia has itself been copyrighted.

The American company Compton a NewMedia has been granted a patent for "a search system in which a multimedia database consisting of text, picture, audio and animated data is searched through multiple graphical and textual entry paths".

In its broadest sense this covers just about everything covered in the last few pages. A truly crazy state of affairs. Compton NewMedia are actually proposing that you pay them to license your multimedia application. Until the big boys such as Microsoft (who produce a help system for Windows that really infringes the patent) and their lawyers can talk some sense into the patent commission, this is what you'll have to do to remain 100% inside the law. Frightening, isn't it? They'll be patenting breathing next!

Individual programs and features

Program name	CARD	HELM	MEDIAPOINT	SCALA	HYPERBOOK	AMIGAQUIE	AMOS	BUTZBASIC 2	LATTICE/SAS C	AREXX
Program type	Multi-media authoring system	Multi-media authoring system	Multi-media authoring system	Multi-media authoring system	Multi-media authoring system	Hypercard system	Programming Language	Programming Language	Programming language	communication language
Hypertext support	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	DIY	No
Graphics support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Limited	Yes	Yes	DIY	No
Amiga Sound support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	DIY	No
MIDI support	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	DIY	No
Animations support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	DIY	No
Animations played from disk	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	DIY	No
AGA graphics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Limited	No - promised	No - promised	DIY	No
External hardware support	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	DIY	No
Scripting language	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (BASIC)	Yes (BASIC)	C	Yes
AREXX	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (Pro only)	No	DIY	A/N
Overall Rating	*****	****	*****	*****	***	***	***	****	***	****

Note: Any system that has an AREXX port can (in theory at least) do anything. For example, CARD can call a program that plays animations directly from disk. Of course, this isn't as convenient as a program like MediaPoint which can directly play animations in this way. Note 2: With Lattice/SAS C, you need to write the lessons yourself. Theoretically, it can do everything.

Note 3: Although AREXX itself cannot display graphics or play sounds, it can ask other programs to do it on its behalf.

Suppliers

WENDIAN SOFTWARE

DISTRIBUTION
East House,
East Road Industrial Estate,
London, SW16 1AN
Tel: 081 543 5500

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Peebleshire,
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England W91 2PY
Tel: 0628 444 294

EUROPHENSE SOFTWARE

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Macclesfield, Cheshire
England SK10 4NP
Tel: 0628 659333

JARGON BUSTERS

● HYPERTEXT

A hypertext system is one in which clicking on a particular word will bring the user to a different or more related text.

● SCRIPTING LANGUAGE

For fine-tuning, it is important that an application can be edited at the script level. For example, although Card applications are generated by clicking and dragging, it is also possible to enter commands directly from the keyboard.

● PLAYBACK FROM DISK
Especially where memory is limited, it is useful to be able to play back animations from disk without having to load them all into memory first.

● EXTERNAL HARDWARE SUPPORT

Some systems can control dedicated hardware such as laser disk players or audio CD players.

● MIDI PLAYBACK

For the best possible musical backing, an external synthesiser can be controlled if the software supports MIDI.



MediaPoint™

multimedia magic for the Amiga®

MediaPoint is the state-of-the-art in interactive presentation software. No other software package on the Amiga has this many features in the standard package. Some of the highlights:

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MediaPoint is complete:

- Standard bundled languages: English, French, German and Dutch.
- Free runtime player.
- No hardware key protection.

Commodore Info Main Menu

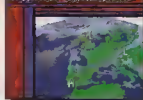
- 1 New Amiga models
- 2 CDTV titles
- 3 Multimedia software
- 4 Other products

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Pen Pal

A superb package, with immense power, to fulfil all your Word Processing needs, and... with an integrated Database too! It's all so easy to use, you'll rarely need to refer to the extensive 250 page lay-flat spiral bound manual. Users frequently tell us that they've never found a program they get on with so well.

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CD32 ZONE

The only place for news and reviews on the CD32

THE END OF SHOVELWARE?



Have you noticed anything different about the CD reviews this issue? Notice how for the first time, it isn't just CD conversions of existing Amiga floppy disk products?

Glimpses down this page to the news piece on Stella Genesis Agency's new game. The big news seems to be that Shovelware is dying, being replaced by genuine CD development. The CD32 seems to be succeeding at speeds that no-one could have expected, as developers start to develop

CD32 products in tandem with PC CD-ROM titles. This can only mean good games for the CD32 as developers draw on all the experiences learned from years of PC construction and start to create games that fully utilise the CD, instead of a standard Amiga game with half an hour of music. Amiga conversions won't help the CD32 survive, but developed-for-CD titles will. Three cheers for the flourishing PC CD-ROM market!

Tony Dillon, Games Editor

DOUBLE THE FUN

Team 17 are stepping forward to come to the aid of the CD32 owners crying out for the kind of software that will make their console-owning friends weep. Relating at the staggeringly low price of £24.99 each, the Team 17 CD32 Double Packs contain some of the Team's greatest games, specially adapted to make use of the CD32 joy pad. Pack One contains the superb shoot 'em up *Project X*, the game that redesigned blasters and took the attention away from platform games for a little while. Accompanying this is *F17 Challenge*, a budget racer to rival most full-price products.

Pack Two brings you *Alien Breed Special Edition*, a revamped version of the game that made Team 17 the success they are, and *Qwak*, a cute platform title in the mould of *Bubble Bobble* and *Super Meatman Brothers*.

Sounds like a bargain? We agree, so get down the shop with the readers! For more information, call Team 17 on 0924 291867.



RUNNING AMUCK

it didn't take long for those over the great pond to catch on, did it? No sooner have 17 Brit released a couple of CDTV and CD32 Public Domain disks, than the Amiga Users Of Calgary get in on the act with *The First AMUCK CD*, a collection of public domain art, sounds and programs taken from the *AMUCK Express* BBS. Everything from JPEGs to MED Modules can be found on here, covering an enormous 610MB. A bargain at only Cdn\$29.99 (Canadian Dollars) plus CDNS3 00 for postage and packing. For full information, write to AMUCK, PO Box 34230 #19, 1200 - 37 St. S.W., Calgary, Alta, T3C 9W2 Tel: (403) 242 5406, remembering to add the international dialling code for Canada.

NEWS

I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW

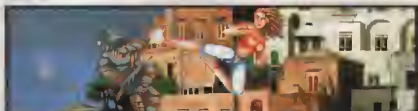


A recent survey by the International Federation of the Photographic Industry (IFPI) showed that over 700,000 illegally printed CDs entered the UK in 1992, showing a dramatic rise in CD piracy as CD mastering units became cheaper and cheaper. Dacronics, Europe's leading independent CD manufacturers

have sailed to the rescue with a new, low cost way of printing full colour holograms onto CD, to help customers identify the original product. Says Chief Executive David Mackie: "In view of the amount of money illegal discs are going to cost legitimate producers, we feel this must be a good, simple and low-cost step towards security. We believe it is the responsibility of the company to provide security features which allow customers to know they are buying the 'real thing'." The other bonus of the system is that it makes the CDs so attractive! For more information, call Dacronics on 061 878 4999.

BIRTH OF A STAR

News just in! Mindscape have just signed the rights to a brand new, CD-only product from new development house Stella Genesis Agency under the working title of *Space Academy*. Being designed and coded by long time programmer John Jones Steele, with extra design and all visuals supplied by artist Dave Rowe, the game features an isometric, forced perspective view used in a way never before seen. John has already had plenty of experience with isometric views from his numerous conversions of *D Generation* for Mindscape, and his CD32 coding is second to none. Interestingly enough, as the game is designed for CD, it will use most of the CD. "We're going to use the CD to store loads of gameplay, rather than cop out with forty minutes of muzak," explains John. Look out for *Space Academy* this coming Christmas. More news as and when we get it.



THE ULTIMATE TEAM COMES TO CD32?

More news from Team 17, this month, comes in the form of a brand new *Body Blows* release - *Ultimate Body Blows*. Seriously revamped, the game features no less than 23 characters in total for you to play around with, featuring many of your favourites from the previous two *Body Blows* games. All the graphics are drawn in 256 colours, so it looks stunning, and with some professional 16 track digital soundtracks. It should sound stunning too!

The best thing about it? Absolutely no disk swapping at all! *Ultimate Body Blows* should be released at the end of March for only £29.99! Call Team 17 on 0924 291867 to book your copy!

THE LABYRINTH OF TIME

The CD32's first straight PC adventure conversion looks stunning, but does that hold true for the gameplay?

Mark Patterson
rings out.

With many of us, including me, still waiting to be really impressed by the CD32, I was keeping my fingers crossed that this would be the game to do it. I'd seen pics of the PC version and as this is supposed to be a direct port I was holding out for something special.

I didn't get off to a good start though. On the box it says it's compatible with all Amiges including CDTV and 1Mb machines with a CD drive. I'm offended, this seems to be a lie as my poor old CDTV seized up at the first sniff of this game and, in fact, the only machine it will run on is the CD32. Which is not surprising when you look at the graphics.

A-MAZING

The game's plot is a little bizarre, and is probably the product of too many late nights and one too many, er, coffees. Dædalos the bloke who

All of the 1900 images in the game have been redrawn.

designed the original *Labyrinth* for King Minos to hide his half-bull son from the clutches of the evil Ronsidium McDonaldus, has made a comeback. Doing a bit of a clever trick, Dædalos' latest creation spans

space time to encompass all kinds of weird dimensions. Once it was completed he decided to try it out by popping over to our reality kidnapping a junior accountant from 9.15 Luton to Kings Cross and dumping him right in his maze. He then proceeded to tell his bewildered and slightly travel sick captive that his only chance of escaping was to find the secret of the maze and destroy it.

As a PC CD-ROM conversion this

is perfect, but then I didn't expect any thing less. The 256-colour graphics are stunning, easily the best seen in an Amiga adventure. I don't know if it's my eyes pecking in after staring at high-resolution Mac monitors for so long, but I swear the graphics flicker, not as bad as the Amigs in HAM mode, but there's a noticeable twitch there all the same. But what really wound me up was the lack of action. Here you have all these lovely static screens, but with nothing happening on them. Once in a while a door might open, you encounter Dædalos who does a great Captain Scares impression as he waves his arms around,



As you can see, the *Labyrinth* itself has been considerably updated.

but for the most part you're just looking at pretty pictures.

The CD32 is also a bit slow when it comes to accessing the graphics. Rather than show a transition between two locations, you have to wait a couple of seconds for the next screen to be loaded. I mean, a little bit of animation as you walked down a corridor would have made a big difference. It can be very annoying when you've got to go through several locations in quick succession, you wait for each one to be loaded individually. Still, the screens are nice though.

For all its visual excellence *Labyrinth*'s playability has all the attraction of a decomposed corpse after a two-week swim in the Thames. The gameplay is quite loose, letting you travel to loads of locations without having to actually kick your brain into gear. When you do decide to actually stop gawping at the graphics and start



NOW WHERE'D MY MAP GO?

Ever get lost in the *Labyrinth*, and a little scared too for the *King of the Madmen* who's looking for the silver globe?



There you are, standing on platforms for a King's Cross, when all of a sudden, what? Some 3000-year-old Greek geezer grabs you by the neck and whisks you off to his maze.



See the clown? Scary, isn't he? However, all the atmosphere's ruined by the completely rubbish digitized laughter he emits. You'll definitely turn the volume down when you hear it.

Thinking about escaping from the Labyrinth, you find out just how weak the gameplay really is.

TRY AND TRY AGAIN

Puzzle solving is a simple case of trial and error. Which key fits which door? Will Object A release Object B so I can get through this door to solve even more similar puzzles? As the game contains somewhere in the region of 280 screens, it can take a bit while to solve even the most rudimentary problem, leaving you time to count the number of steps backwards the Labyrinth's programmers have taken when compared to recent games.

This is hindered further by the lack of a decent user-interface. You've only got a few rudimentary commands as you dispose, such as pick up and drop which severely limits the ways you can try and solve puzzles.

I don't want to rant, but old-fashioned text interface adventures offered far more scope for gameplay than this. And now with the trend for interactive characters and backdrops in games like Indiana Jones and most Sierra adventures, Labyrinth seems pathetically inadequate.

WHICH WAY NOW?

The real challenge behind the game is escaping from the labyrinth, which is quite a feat considering its size. Normally this would involve several yards of graph paper, a few pencils and an eraser, but for some strange reason the programmers have decided to include an auto-map feature.



I'm the first to admit that it is far more practical, especially for someone like me who's willing has to be read within four hours or be forever flung into, but it does seem to defeat the object of the game slightly. Every time you enter a new location the map is updated, so it's almost impossible to get lost. Combine that with the rather rudimentary puzzle solving and you get the impression that

One of the more impressive looking locations in the game.

completing the game is matter of persistence over real adventuring skill.

If companies are going to do direct PC to CD32 conversions, why don't they choose good games? The forthcoming CD32 version of Simon The Sorcerer promises to be a significant event in Compact Disc adventures, but in the meantime I would say no to conversions of excellent PC titles like Sam And Max and Day Of The Tentacle.

Don't be taken in by the pretty graphics and the promise of PC-style adventuring. Labyrinth Of Time may be like my milkman, slow, crusty and rarely delivers, but if you're an adventure-starved CD32 owner with cash to burn, you might want to overlook the faults, in which case you get a passable, if not that challenging, slice of surreal role-playing. **CD**

(Top) Even gigantic hairy minotaurs need to have a few home comforts, although this kind of set up is a little rudimentary for my tastes. (Left) All through the game you can meet friendly characters like this, who will probably stop the object you were looking for when you kill them.

EA £39.99

CD32 ONLY

ELECTRONIC ARTS, 90 NERON DRIVE, LANDLEY, WERKS, SL3 5XP. TEL: 0753 549442.

RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE	ADVENTURE
TEAM	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS	JOYPAD
NUMBER OF DISKS	1
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE	NO
MEMORY	1MB

GRAPHICS	*****95%
SOUND	*****98%
LASTABILITY	*****94%
PLAYABILITY	*****97%

"A significant release for the CD32. Shame it's not very good."

OVERALL 69%



Escape from Labyrinth and you'll find yourself in a deeper cage. This is Labyrinth of Time, where the artists who'd a bit bored, so need of the actress look the same. What a rip-off.



You're watching some progress here, there's just another 275 screens to go, it's worth sticking with it as the graphics take on are just slowly improving.

When you encounter an alien ship to which you have not yet been exposed, expect some interesting encounters. In the case of the 100 games, there is also a preview of the alien.

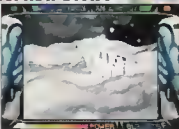
PREY

» **ALMATHRA OUT NOW £19.99**

Now here's a game which gave me a jolly laugh — about ten million years ago on the CDTV. It's set inside an abandoned mining ship where the occupants have all been devoured by aliens. Sounds familiar? Damn right.

Into the alien environment comes you, a puzzle-solver xenomorph 'zaplin' desperado. That's the idea. Sadly something's gone wrong in the execution. The gameplay has you nudging through miles of deserted corridors, tracking down fresh oxygen supplies for your environment suit and frequently being killed. When you do encounter an alien the result is a rather disappointing combat scene where you attempt to duck the alien's feeble attacks while trying to kill it with bullets.

The action is accompanied by heavy breathing noises, which is supposed to be you. In your suit, but instead sounds like something which could get you arrested. This is matched by the graphics which, bar a few nice effects, are painfully dull. Don't expect to see much of the



The game featured a nice fractal intro, but the same quality of graphics fail to reappear in the game.

alien's ether, when one appears your suit switches to 'thermal' mode which basically means you get a druddy, ill-formed pic of what should have been a well-drawn alien.

What makes this a thousand times worse is the thought that this isn't actually a CD32 game. It's merely a CDTV title with different packaging and a limited intro. And when you compare the two machines it's like someone suggestion you hook up their dodgy mobile home to the back of your Bentley. Things like that are just not on and neither's this game. **Mark Patterson**

45%

PIRATES GOLD

Their graphics look nice enough when they're not moving, but it was as they started sailing you realised the artist was extremely unfettered.



MICROPROSE OUT NOW £24.99



This is what happens when you blow Ellis, skip out all the hi-tech gadgetry and set it in the 18th century Caribbean. You start off as a

wannabe pirate with a little boat of your own, several thousand miles of ocean and a couple of sailors who've tagged along for a laugh.

Right from the start you're on your own. There are plenty of careers to embark on, from out and out brigandage to attacking outposts and innocent towns. This freedom is basically do what you want in the game's strongest feature. You're not constrained by plots so you're free to progress, by bigger ships and hire bigger crews.

Before you hike to the seas: with your crew of salty sailors you need to pay a visit to the docks. This isn't as suspicious as it first seems. Here you can buy an amnesty from the king, who'll promise he won't send out any more fleets to sink you, or sign up as a privateer — a part-time member of his fleet.

One-on-one combat forms an integral part of this game. Unfortunately it's not very good. When you've selected your weapon, maul, sword, cutlass, but no pikes, you're treated to what at first seems to be a graphically excellent combat

section. That is until the characters start moving, at which point the ludicrously unconvincing animation ruins any sense of realism, as does the gameplay which requires you to stab your foe at least five times to kill him.

On a larger note, no matter how cautious you are, you'll always end

The two-page intro with musical cut-ups describes you as a

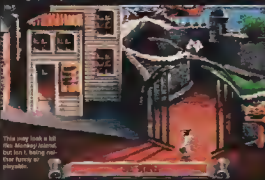


Prey - ACD32 action in progress

up in a naval conflict. Here you get a top-down view of the combat area, which contains tiny graphics of the ships. Looking at this, and the fact that the game is on CD, so there's no memory problems, I can't help but think more could have been done here.

Pirates Gold is a nice concept which plenty of good ideas. Unfortunately it doesn't deliver the goods. **Mark Patterson**

64%



This may look a bit like Monkey Island, but isn't, being rather funny or playful.

WIN AN OVERDRIVE

To celebrate the phenomenal success of their Overdrive hard drives for the A1200 and A600, those incredibly generous people at Software Demon have thoughtfully offered us 10 drives worth over £2,500 to offer to you, our lovely readers, as competition prizes.

First prize is a massive 540Mb capacity Overdrive 35 — big enough to run your own bulletin board from! Second prize is a 426Mb drive, third prize is a 340Mb unit and there are seven runners up prizes of 130Mb drives!

To stand a chance to win one of these drives, all you have to do is answer a few simple questions. Once you've worked out the answers, write them on the back of a postcard along with your name and address and then send the whole shebang off to

**OVERDRIVE COMPO,
CU AMIGA, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon
Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.**

Here are the questions:

- How many bits are in a megabyte?
a) 6368608
b) 8192
c) neither of the above
- What is the predominant colour of Software Demon's Overdrive advert?
a) Greenish, blue
b) Brownish, gold
c) Yellowish, purple
- Which company manufactures Overdrive?
a) Archos
b) Archaos
c) Anerchos
- CU AMIGA first previewed the Overdrive in which issue of the mag?
a) January 1994
b) August 1993
c) October 1993
- Which of the following items do Software Demon NOT advertise?
a) Amiga 4000s
b) Viets Pro
c) ZX Spectrums

Well that's it. Easy weren't they? Honestly we're just too good to you sometimes!

The closing date of the compo is March 31st 1994, so get scribbling!

RULES

- The Editor's decision is final
- No correspondence will be entered into.
- Closing date for all entries is March 31st, 1994
- This competition is not open to any employees of EMAP Images or Software Demon.
- All answers on a postcard please or a recycled Christmas/Birthday card if you want to save the world

OVERDRIVE



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[illegible][illegible]

EXPLOSIVE!

With a tank!

When it comes to strategic wargames, there are few companies that know how to bring it to the masses as well as Empire does. They did it with *Team Yankee*. They managed it again with *Pacific Islands Campaign* was superb, and now they've slipped back into the breach with *Campaign 2* - a brain stormer of a wargame that sees you controlling tanks, aircraft and ground forces in the kind of battle situation that would have had Napoleon weeping into his hat.

To celebrate the release of this strategic milestone, Empire have kindly donated no less than five copies of *Campaign 2* - five 81% scoring combat simulator to go to five of our most fortunate readers. Not only that, but we also have five stunning Tamiya model tanks to give away! Those super high-quality kits are as detailed as the real thing, and their easy but intricate design means you'll have just as much fun placing them together as you will admiring them afterwards.

There are five completely different tanks to win, from an M3 Bradley to a Challenger, and even a mighty Kampfpanzer Leopard. All these tanks are featured in *Campaign 2*, and could be found in your living room if you can answer the following question correctly.

What is the name of the third movie in Oliver Stone's famous war trilogy?

That shouldn't tax your brains too much. All you need to do now is scribble that down on the back of a postcard and send it to: "War? No Tanks, CU AMIGA, Priority Couriers, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. All entries to be in by March 31st 1994.

RU empire

1. This is a game for everyone, provided they don't work for EMAP Images or Empire. OK, it helps if they have an Amiga too.
2. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. We just can't afford the postage, you see.
3. The closing date for all entries is 31st of March 1994.
4. Did you know that you don't need a chequebook to write a cheque?
5. It's true. You could write it on a napkin if you want.
6. And the shop would have to take it. My cousin did it once...

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M113

M4

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SCREEN SCENE

Turn up the colour contrast on your monitor, boost up the stereo sound and prepare to plug into the most revealing, witty, informative, critical and downright marvelous Amiga game review section in this entire magazine.

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- 76 MANCHESTER UNITED PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS
- 79 SOCCER EXPERT ORACLE THE TIPSTER
- 82 SNAPPERAZI SARRI TEAM AGA
- 83 ADDICTION
- 84 S.U.B.
- 88 SIMON THE SOCCERER
- 90 VPM - ASSASSIN LEISURE SUIT LARRY CRUISE FOR A CORPSE LASER SQUAD KING'S QUEST GUNSHIP LORDS OF CHAOS
- 96 VAMPIRA

A CU Screen Star is a game scoring 85%-89%. If a game gets one of these, it'll be a lasting quality and you can rest assured that, if you decide to purchase it, you won't be wasting your money.



93% and a game is worth a Superstar. We hardly throw them around, but if a game gets one it'll be completely outstanding.

'How do you see so far into the future?' the readers cry. 'With the aid of the CU AMIGA crystal ball,' we reply adjusting our headscarves and gold hoop earrings

BUBBLE AND SQUEAK

AUDIOGENIC

THE GAMEPLAY: Bubble is a small boy, who looks a little like Charlie Brown. His friend, Squeak, is a small, friendly but slightly stupid dragon. Together they have to, well, run around very large screens solving puzzles and collecting gems. Bubble can ride on Squeak's back to reach some inaccessible areas, or kick Squeak around the screen to reach others.



WHAT'S NEW: The versatility. By having two characters with completely different abilities, Audiogenic have managed to come up with

some of the most fiendish puzzles yet, with the whole thing held together with the sweetest onarooters since Robocod learned to wiggle while he walks. An intelligent control method means that the fire button can be used in a variety of different ways, depending on where you are and which object you're facing at which time.

FIRST



BEHIND THE SCENES: The whole thing has been coded in-house by Audiogenic, by the same team who pieced together the impressive *Graham Gooch's Test Cricket*, *FIRST IMPRESSIONS*. Extremely good. With a couple of very playable levels under our belts, we can safely say that *Bubble And Squeak* is shaping up to be one of the best Amiga platform games ever.

Amazing graphics, mixed with some mind-bogglingly addictive puzzles will send this game to number one and keep it there. Look out for a full review next issue.

NAUGHTY ONES



KOMPART

THE GAMEPLAY: *Naughty Ones* is a good platformer with lots of action and a cute but oodles of what's more, shades runs, jumps and balances throughout the five different levels of psychopathic robots, firing stars and undead mummies. A handy arrow tells you in which order you need to kill the enemies with your feeble little point gun, and icons scattered about in all sorts of inaccessible places.

Two players can share the work, making for double the fun. WHAT'S NEW: The expanding map. As you progress through the game all the exits to the previous screens remain open, so you can go back and cover old ground at any point.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

ON THE BALL

ASCEN

THE GAMEPLAY It's a football management game, as if you couldn't tell by the screenshots. You take your team, train them up, sort out their tactics and then get them out onto the pitch and up to the top of the league. As information friendly as they come, everything you could possibly need to know is displayed in front of you, as you race for the top!

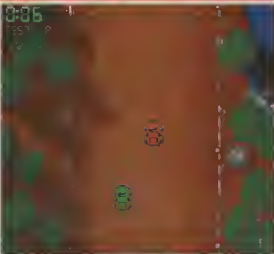
WHAT'S NEW The gorgeous in-match graphics, for a start. A whole series of watercolour illustrations were created, then scanned in and touched up. The result is some stunning animation. Other than that you can try out some brand new tactics (legined injuries?), perform TV interviews, bribe players and do all the other things that managers do.

BEHIND THE SCENES German team Ascen are the lords and ladies



behind this one, and if their previous title — *The Pzncian* — is anything to go by, then this year of so spent developing *On The Ball* should pay off quite nicely.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS Surprisingly good. *On The Ball* looks set to revolutionise football management, as a wealth of new ideas and fresh approaches set it up to be a huge release. The proof of the pudding is in the playing, and some of the subtle options could well be the key to this game's success. We'll have a full review soon.



TURBO TRAX

ARCANE

THE GAMEPLAY As you can tell from the screenshot on this page, it's a top view, multi-directional scrolling racer, in the mould of *Overdrive* and *Micro Machines: Race* against three computer opponents all once over three different terrains (cities, off road courses and ice) or try out your speed skills in the time trials. There are four different types of car for you to race and more challenges than seem feasible!

WHAT'S NEW Not a huge amount, really. On paper, *Turbo Trax* isn't doing a lot that hasn't

Trax is their first game as an independent developer and publisher, made up of MD Steve Iles, graphic artist Mark Worthum and main coder Andy Costes.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS I loved *Overdrive*, so if this is even better (as I am promised it is), then I can't wait. I've always been a fan of this type of game, and the glut that has appeared recently (*Skidmarks*, *Micro Machines* etc) is doing nothing to quench my thirst for more. Roll on next month, when we can show you more of this little number.



Naughty Ones looks like being a good old fashioned two-player platform game.

This allows for a maze-like element to creep into many of the levels.

BEHIND THE SCENES The game has been coded by the Danish company Interactivision who were responsible for our extremely popular coverdisk, *Interworld*. *Naughty Ones* is their first real arcade game.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS Good little game. The graphics are very colourful and full of character, giving the whole game that 'just one more go' look. The playable levels we've seen so far are very good, so it all bodes well for Interactivision. We'll be reviewing *Naughty Ones* in our very next issue.



been seen in other games, but it does look like it's going to do it all a lot better. One nice feature is the inclusion of an indicator that hovers in front of the car and tells you which direction the next bend will be in — useful for when you're learning the course!

BEHIND THE SCENES Arcane Software have been working on other people's games for over two years, having worked in titles like *Syndicate*, *Birds Of Prey* and *Powermancer Turbo*.





K240

Graham Ing and his merry men have been beavering away on the sequel to the smash hit *Utopia*. Tony Dillon enjoys some BR coffee and gets the whole story.

Sheffield is in a bit of a state at the moment. The centre of the city has been turned into one gigantic one way system as the local council dig up the roads with a view of putting in a new tram system. The Town Planners must be having a field day, obviously employing the planning talents they've developed from playing *Utopia* for hours on end. At least, that's what I thought as I tried to work around the backstreets of the ex-steel capital of Britain in search of an exclusive look at Gremlin's next success story, *K240*. I sat down with designer and coder Graham Ing, in the battlefields that are Gremlin's new wing (the building is in, say no more), to find out exactly what *K240* is.

Graham explains: 'It's a big military strategy game. Basically, you are

based on an asteroid, having just arrived in a sector of space (Sector K240, for those who were wondering what the unusual name was all about), which you know nothing about. Your brief is two-fold, the first is to grab as much new ore off all the asteroids in the sector as you can to take back to Earth and make loads of money. Secondly, somewhere in there is an alien, who is trying to do the same thing, so clearly one of you has to wipe the other one out. Let's face it, it's plain xenophobia!'

Graham has already had considerable success with *Utopia*, a game that for many took *Populous* to a new level. *Utopia 2* would have been too easy, and if they had gone for more of the same, would the world have been happy? So what exactly were Gremlin

after? 'Really what we wanted when we set out to do the game was flexibility. There's no one way to win the game. You've got lots of things at your disposal, and it's up to you which path you take. You start with a single asteroid with a tiny sensor range and nothing else. From there you've got to work miracles.'

'It's been in development, on and off, for nearly two years. The specification initially was



You might only start out with a rather humble looking spacecraft, but once you've got your asteroid, get yourself a space yard, and you can build ships like these



immense. I just sat down and designed it all. Since then it has all been rectified and redesigned - for example the sector I'm

putting in at the moment is totally new, only designed a couple of days ago. It really is a case of us playing it as we go along, saying, 'Oh that's not quite right' or 'That's got to be changed', trying to get it as flexible and as fun as we can', he continues.

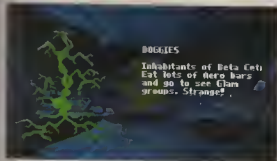
If you've already looked over our incredible coverdisk, you might have some idea about what the game is

like. Mr. Ing and colleagues had a fairly hard time defining what the game was going to be.

The original brief was completely open ended. Essentially it was 'Let's have a good military strategic space game'. Very soon, literally days after, came the concept of the asteroids. That's been in there all along. We thought it would be quite a different thing to do, with all these asteroids - and there are a lot of them out there - all hurtling about in different directions at different speeds, coming in and out of your sensor range and colliding with each other. Later on in the game, you can actually plunk engines on the things and steal them around. The concept of asteroids is also useful because you've got such a limited area. The asteroids are quite small, so you have to be more



On most screens, being a bit of an intergalactic space lord, it's a real game to see what you can do with the little ships and bases of different space cities. The picture above shows a busy production area, with a large number of ships and bases, built in the K240, and an army of little ships on the other side of the screen (above).



No prizes for guessing what these are. And there are another six alien types to come across in your stages in the game too.

strategic about what you're actually pulling on them," says Graham. So you're space trading. That to some people might seem enough. After all, if you're going to spend all your time making sure that you aren't smashing into other floating pieces of rock while mining like a right one how much more time do you need to till? Graham is confident that you'll need at least three pairs of hands and a multi-tasking brain.

He adds: "The game also contains a fully working colony simulation. Not only do you have to mine ore from the asteroids, you've also got to keep

your colony going by managing a whole series of resources. It sounds a little complicated but when you get into it you'll find that, although we've spent a very long time getting the simulation just right, the actual player interface is quite straightforward. It's not as if you have to worry about two million things at once. Essentially you've got Power, Air, Fuel and Water, which you have

to make sure you generate enough of. You are shown your production, usage and surplus, and as long as you make sure that your production is higher than your surplus, you'll be alright. There are other things to watch out for, of course such as population control, radionuclide control, security and more aspects generally more and more as time goes on. You've got a selection of buildings to build with - over 40 in the entire game, all of which do different things for your colonies. Obviously the more money you have, the more buildings you have access to, although the bigger buildings do take time to create."

With all this going on, Graham is confident that everyone will be able to play the game with a minimum of fuss. He says: "We've gone for a completely customisable interface. It's

all very well working through the hierarchy to find the options you want, but if you are using an option a lot, you can extract the button and keep it out on the main screen. We've got several time saving features in the game to make it easier to play. For example in a position where you want to place a big building down and it isn't particularly clear from the view where you can place it, there's a tactical mode which allows you to see where all the spaces are.

Ah, so you do have to build! The game isn't that different from *Utopia* then, is it? Well, perhaps just a bit. Initially in the game you have very little money, which quickly runs out. Just dropping down a few buildings, quickly eats up your savings, so you have to start mining fast. Once you've made some useful amounts of money, you can start to buy plans and equipment from a company called Sytech."

At the start of the game there are only three different types of ship that you can build. Some you can then

buy from Sytech, and others can only be built from huge space docks, because they're so huge. Typically you'll start with a small ship, which you can then customise with a whole series of weapons. Ships can then be grouped into fleets and used to defend your asteroids or go and attack others in the vicinity," says Graham.

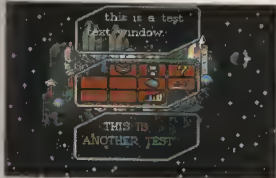
Why would you want to go out fighting? Because of the standard alien content, of course, and K240 is full of it.

"There are six different aliens in the game, each one has a different set of tactics and they range from easy through to extremely hard. Eventually, when the game is finished, you'll have to get hold of spies and send them over to the enemy asteroid before you can go and have a look. Once you've sent a spy over there it will send you reports of what's actually happening and what it thinks they are doing. To make it a little bit easier, it isn't always a hundred percent accurate. For example you might have your spy sitting in orbit when it suddenly tells you that the alien has launched a fleet. Now that might be accurate, but you still have to interrogate it and ask it for more information such as where is the fleet headed. If it tells you, and you then rush to that asteroid, you might find that it was completely wrong and you lose one of your undefended bases so you'll have to be a little careful there," he concludes.

After only a couple of hours, I seem to be getting the hang of it. This game looks like it'll take some playing before you fully master the sector, but will it be as much fun as it promises to be? We'll have a full review, soon. **20**



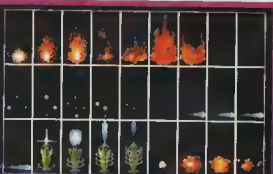
The final sequence of K240 is absolutely mind-boggling. Here is just a taste of what it's like to come



The development of K240 has resulted in a lot of experimentation with various types of window. Here is just one of the different permutations that were tried.



Above and right: There is a lot of explosive power in K240, which presents an intense but beautiful scene of playing around with the alien's graphical presentation of the deblocking operator.



SIM CITY 2000



WIP

City planners have been anticipating this one for ages. Tony Dillon treks across the heart of Wales to take a sneak look at Maxis' latest Software creation.

Ever since it made an appearance on Channel 4's *Equinox*, the programme Amiga and PC owners have been waiting for Maxis *Sim City 2000* with their tongues somewhere around the region of their ankles. It's promised to be bigger and better than any of Maxis' games to date and looking at the Macintosh version, I have to say that it's been well worth the wait so far.

Aberystwyth-based coder John Jones-Steele is the man responsible for converting this enormous game. He isn't a simple - get the game as close to the Mac version as possible.

It's basically the same as *Sim City*, only with lots of nice refinements, begins Mr Jones-Steele. There are a lot of things in *Sim City 2000* that weren't in *Sim City*, that meant you couldn't really simulate a city in its entirety. Things like water and plumbing were missing before. Disaster are better this time around, fires, for example, work more realistically than before. The whole transport system has been revamped as well. You no longer just lay down a track and let traffic run up and down it - now you've got to have a terminus at each end. Same with buses. In fact, you can have a combined transport system now, so roads and rail intersect properly. There's just a lot more there, now. You can build much bigger cities, and actually model cities now. If you know how your local town is laid



You can call up information on your *Sim City 2000* at any point in the proceedings

out, you can actually build a town that's pretty similar to it and see what's going wrong, if anything is, and how you can change it.

The first thing I needed to do was to get all the text and pictures from the Mac, John continues. There were basically two ways I could have done it. The first, which would have



Just some of the graphics lifted from the resource files. There are quite a lot of these ready aren't there?

taken the longest, was to just get all the resources direct from Maxis. Instead of doing that, I just pulled all the resources files out of the Macintosh version, loaded them into the Amiga, and then ran a conversion program I've written to turn Macintosh pictures into PC bitmaps, and then rebuilt the resource file from that. The nice way of working like this is that when we come to do German and other language versions, all we need to do is pull the resource file from the Mac, convert it and drop it back in.

What will surprise most people is the little time it has taken to actually convert *Sim City 2000*. I saw it after two months work, and at this stage there is only a couple more weeks' work needed.

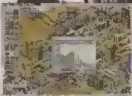
For my part, the reason I've taken so little time to convert is that it was written in C, rather than C++ - *Sim Life* was written in C++, and at the

Left, A far view of your enormous city (and apparently very happy) city

For 1995, Sim City 2000

Centering Tool

City 2000



There are more graphics and charts here than there are in the Dept of Education

The weather's been cooler than Prince Charles lately, so what better time for Rik Skews to look at *Winter Olympics*, a game based entirely on sports played in such chilly some conditions.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Strike me with a brick, was it really ten years ago that Summer Games the first of Epyx's classic games series appeared? Amazingly enough it is. And although a heck of a lot of computer software has flowed down the river of time since, the basic format of these sports-based games has remained much the same.

This year it was the turn of Lillehammer in Norway to host the 27th Olympic Winter Games. So what's the game all about then? You (and up to three friends if you've got them) can compete against each other (the different players are represented by different competing countries) as well as, or with up to 15 simulated computer opponents. There's 14 disciplines, covering six Olympic winter sports (these being alpine, bobsleigh, luge, biathlon, speed track speed skating and ski jumping). And you choose up to four of them at any one time (the biathlon is always included).

Clearly the first thing that *Winter Olympics* has going for it is that there's no figure skating event, the bane of the Epyx product, while the included opening and closing ceremonies turn up the atmosphere no

This is what it's all about, getting a medal.

end. Sadly, all the games — apart from short track speed skating — are one-player only which takes some bite out of the gameplay. After all, all the good things in life are best done with a partner, eh?

GOLDEN MOULDIES

The earliest recorded date given for the first Olympics is 776BC, although historians being the knowledgeable people they are, believe the games began well before then. Staged during midsummer at Olympia, (with *The Grateful Dead* suggesting no doubt) the festival became a regularly scheduled event during the pre-Christian golden age of Greece. The Games were held in honor of Zeus, the most important God in ancient Greek mythology and all were would cease during the contests. There must have been a lot of hired people however, because records suggest that the first Olympics lasted only one week, a 200yd (183m) foot race.



Graphically the strongest event on offer — the biathlon is also strong gameplay wise.



INTRODUCING...

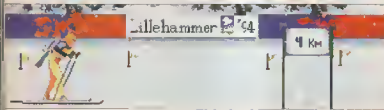
So just what are the sports on offer? Ladies and Gentlemen, in no particular order, may I present them. Biathlon is a combined sport of cross-country skiing and rifle shooting and takes the form of a link event (just as it did in the Epyx game) between the other sports. Movement of the athlete is achieved by simply moving the joystick left and right in a regular rhythm while shooting is achieved by, you guessed it, moving the cursor over the target and clicking that fire button.

This is perhaps the strongest event on offer here. Ignore the boring walking section and wait until you've reached the targets. The graphics here are walking in the biathlon require rhythmic joystick movements, not just frantic wagging.

very good, particularly the view through the viewfinder. The gun handles very well, with a lovely weighted feeling. Pleasing stuff indeed.

The downhill track is based on what is apparently one of the world's toughest downhill courses. The winner is whoever completes the course in the fastest time after just one run. Miss a gate and you'll be disqualified. However, you can continue to complete the course but no result will be given. Hitting the trackside obstacles is not advised unless you want to become a permanent Christmas tree fixture. Control here (as with all the Alpine disciplines) is achieved by moving the stick left and right, while pressing up locks the skis, speeding him up in the process, while holding the joystick down brakes him.

The futuristically named super-g is up next. Another alpine event, this is set on a somewhat shorter track than that used for the downhill. Again the winner is decided after one run.



The downhill event is the worst on offer. And yet it really is as slow as it looks. While each event is loaded you're treated to a great atmosphere depicting the event.

THE SUN NEVER SHINES IN NORWAY

Apart from having a fairly recent factory from the Norwegians aren't exactly famous for much are they? Okay, so it *was* 1988 then. A he could safely be added to the list but the only other things we could think of was that they tend to say "meow" quite a lot and all their cars are called "Furby". Probably. The accompanying season's brochure of Winter Olympics doesn't go a long way to changing our opinion of the Norwegians as it describes the region's favourite leisure pursuits as swimming, angling and swimming. The Norwegians, they're a bit boring aren't they?

The giant slalom's next. The winner here is decided after two runs. It's a case of lowest overall time winning. Slalom's much the same, other than the winner here being the competitor who has the fastest aggregate time after two runs. All the downhill courses are very weak gameplay wise, partly because they are too slow, with little to avoid, but primarily because they are far too long.

Last of the skied events is the ski jumping section which requires strength, grace and courage: not to mention a healthy insurance policy. Competitors with "Eagle" in their name are frowned upon, especially if they're representing Britain. Two jumps are required, with points being

awarded for style and technique as well as the distance achieved. Hitting the when the green light shows sends your skier spinning off into oblivion. Just like real life going through a red light means instant disqualification. Tapping left or right keeps the skis straight which is essential to build up speed. Once in the air it's 'simply' a case of keeping the correct stance by moving the joy stick up and down and pressing fire at the right time as you come in to land. Leave the fire button too long and you could find yourself becoming an experiment in 3D television as you hurtle towards the world's press screaming wildly. Despite the simplicity of this event it's actually pretty

good fun thanks mainly to its speed and I'll bet you'll never tire from making your competitor crumple up in a heap. Hear those loudens snap!

Bobsleigh next. Yep, speed rush city this one. Expect to push your competitors to 4 G as you hurtle down the course's 1,365 metres. The control here is of the wobble-waggle variety with frantic left and righting to push start the bobsleigh. Once in it's simply a case of pushing either left or right to keep the best line on the track.

Coming in to the home straight and it's the luge event we bump into. This strange piece of kit is for one or two people who hurtle around the track bobsleigh style in a light toboggan. The controls here (and indeed the game itself) are much the same as the bobsleigh event, although the winner is the person who has the best aggregate time over two runs. Bobsleigh, Luge whatever is up there with *Batman*. The 3D effect is first and convincing and the grating sound

effects give this event a real hang on-to-your-pants effect.

Lastly there's short track speed skating, where you get to wear rather raunchy skin tight-togs as you hurtle around an icy track with a group of similarly clad skaters. Once again it's a case of rising left and right to build up speed. In case you wonder how you move it's a case of shuffling left and right on the joystick with the fire button pressed down. This is a frustrating event to start with and requires a lot of time to get used to. Bear with it though 'cos it's the fastest event on offer and pretty damn exciting. I can tell you especially with those skin tight clothes. Phwoar!

So, all original stuff on offer huh? No, not exactly. And that's a big problem with *Winter Olympics*. You're likely to have seen games like this a million times before. Most of the sub-games require little more than either wiggling the joystick or tapping it left or right. You could argue that this is a welcome blast from the past but the old Epyx games had much more variety than this. Take the similarity here between the four skiing events for example. The downhill and Luge are much the same also, hardly likely to create longlasting gameplay either.

Presentation is a very good though, with lots of options and some nicely detailed graphics, especially on the still screens. Sound FX are convincing too, and the tunes, while not being strong musically, create a suitably tense feel as you rush around the courses. If you're looking for a good blast from the past then take a gender at this, as it recreates the feel of the old Epyx product pretty well and is the sort of game you'll dig out on occasions for years to come. **CD**

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NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-4
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE: NO
MEMORY: 1Mb

GRAPHICS: *****84%
SOUND: *****78%
LASTABILITY: *****73%
PLAYABILITY: *****79%

"A run in most parts, nicely executed game."

OVERALL 79%

The bobsleigh section is speed city as you hurtle down the 1,365 metre course

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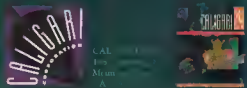
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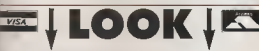
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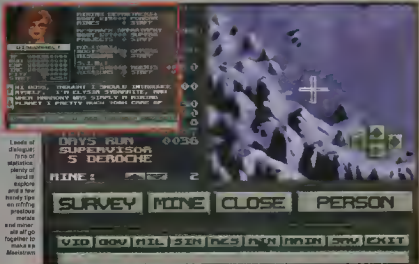
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THE HEAT IS ON

War games are often viewed as archaic, dull and of little appeal to anyone who doesn't wear an anorak. Fortunately, once in a while a game such as *Maelstrom* comes along to give people's views a kick up the bottom. Mark Patterson goes to war...



MAELSTROM

I don't know all this talk of peace and disarmament, when you never quite know what's out there. Take the peaceful people of the planet Harmony in *Maelstrom*, for example. They had no weapons, long hair and preached peace and love. Then aliens invaded, destroyed everyone who tried to reason with them and subjugated the rest.

Without a clue of how to run a proper war and with passive resistance lying at every attempt, they call you in to work for their biggest corporation and to rescue an army capable of freeing the planet - saving the scene for a high-tech interstellar wargame with you as the key player.

I AM THE MASTER!

Any game where I get to be called Overlord and have a pretty PA is fine by me. All I was lacking were some gravelly subjects and peeled grapes. Even without I was perfectly happy to wreak death and destruction on the forces of evil.

Unfortunately, bureaucracy is the factor which demolishes this game. Basically the brief is - you want a war? You pay for it! Also, seeing that Harmony's sole reason is from mining, you'll need to do your hard hat grab your canary and head for the pits. The more your mines produce the more cash you have to spend on building armies. The mining section is similar in lots of ways to Virgin's *Dune*, although in this case it's very dull. There must be a more interest-



Having the dash to pay for your army is only half the battle in *Maelstrom*. Once you've done that it's time to utilize the statistics available to you to create a real machine with running.

my way to limit the amount of money you spend on forces.

To start with, your army is weak and entrusting a battle is liable to earn you a scudsting. However, a quick call to the research and development department followed by several large payments will lead to better weapons. Building your forces is your first task. With only limited cash it's hard to decide whether to spend your money on ground forces, or build up a sizeable aerial squadron. This bit is actually more absorbing

than battles themselves, as you're never sure if you've got the right combinations until they've been slaughtered or return in one piece from the battle.

More important than any weapons is your phone book. Your video phone is the most important bit of kit you possess. From the safety of your office you have to deal with government officials, scientists and soldiers. With this phone you can keep track of what's going on in the world, what your bosses think of you and any news which might give you a tactical advantage.

I would advise you to install this game on a hard disk, unless you're very patient. It comes on six disks and has loads of annoying swaps which interrupt the action with irritating frequency. Extra memory would probably remedy some of the problem, but I wouldn't be so inclined to play this game without a hard disk.

DODGY GRAPHICS?

Like most wargames, the graphics are extremely poor. Most of the time you're looking at dull head-outs punctuated by the occasional animated play of the person at the other end of the phone line. A bit more could have been done with the user interface, all the screens are accessed via a row of tiny boxes right at the bottom of the screen. Several times I accidentally clicked on the wrong thing to be faced with a multitude of disk swaps before I got to

where I wanted to go.

There's enough here to please ardent strategy buffs, which basically means the isn't the sort of game you can have a quick go on. I prefer *Dune 2*, mainly because it's more polished and far easier to get into. If you're the sort of person whose strategy game tolerance limit stretches as far as *Powernigger* then this isn't a game for you. ☹

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SOUND *****70%
LASTABILITY *****85%
PLAYABILITY *****82%

Unusual and engrossing
strategy game.

OVERALL 84%

SUPER METHANE BROTHERS

Paul Presley reviews a game that involves releasing gas. Insert your own joke here...



Plenty of bonuses wait the avid collector: Bananas, bananas, building bricks, etc.

Hew we did cartwheels when Arkonoid appeared. How we whooped and huzzabed when Frontier triggered our memories of a mispent youth sat in front of Ektis. But see also how we treated *Super Space Invaders* with an adequate degree of distaste. You can only push nostalgia so far before it turns around and punches you squarely on the nose. A lesson there for us all.

But with that rather fierce warning still ringing in our minds we once again embark on the express train of memories and return to our 8-bit salad days with *Super Methane Brothers*. The secret — and this is an important bit — is to treat your aging classic to a complete overhaul at the Nintendo game workshop. This is what Apache Software have done

with the Bubble Bobble genre and so managed to create a game that appears fresh and new.

HIDDEN DELIGHTS

The idea, as with all of yesterday's arcade brethren, is a simple one. Clear each screen of its enemy infestations and progress to the next. Complete a hundred and you win the game. Complete a mere ninety-nine or less and you are deemed to be found wanting. But wait! Such simplicity is perhaps too much to comprehend. Before you turn your attention towards something with a little more bite you should be told that there is more than meets the eye awaiting your joystick-carned commands.

Bonuses by the hundred sit, of men a variety. From raging fruits (of the apple and orange kind) to little molar cars. From giant playing cards to over-cooked stragulas. All are worth points and so much more and it is here that we see the true beauty of *SMB* — the thought that has gone into providing the player with much more than the initial challenge.

To contain all this you would naturally expect a plot. Such plots are usually as thin as a week-old pair of socks and here we do not have an exception. The siblings are an unearthly pair, although they share

much in common with the Californian youth — a love of trawling the country in an open-top sports car — without wheels. On one such trip their car hits a snag, or a rock if you will, hurling the pair from their seats and towards a mysterious tower. In true Scooby Doo fashion they investigate and find themselves trapped. Their only hope of escape coming from a mysterious stranger who arms them and reveals their objectives.

This is told in the opening animation, a graphical sequence that sets the style for the game to come. Cartoon frames are the key to *SMB*'s appeal. Cartoons in the Japanese mould (large eyes on small creatures). Cute and colourful is not



Complete a level and the Bungee Rope Of Doom will appear and drag you on to the next.

so much a watchword as a whole Bible at the designers' offices. The sound too is interesting — you'll either love it or hate it.

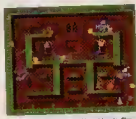
Apache appear to have gone to several towns and had what amounts to a field work when it comes to the game design though. Pick up enough banana bonuses and you gain access to certain cheat rooms. Collect four different playing cards and you arrive at the hidden playing card rooms. Accumulate enough bonuses in these rooms and you enter passages to yet further stages. The list is endless and does more than enough to provide you with more to do than just shoot things.

Mind you, there's even several ways to do this. You have your gas guns of course, but you can also hit your opponents with water, throw marbles at them, hurl a few tennis-balls, and even turn the pesky varmints into nine-pins and lob a bowling ball at them. All of this depends on finding the bonuses available and putting them to use.

IT TAKES TWO BABY
Now here is a funny thing. I was playing *SMB* by myself and after several hours I began thinking that the last thing I might not be as great as I first thought. Then someone else picked up the second joystick, pressed start, sucked up a bad guy (the method required to dispose of them) and threw it at me, stunning me for several seconds — two-player gameplay had been discovered!

The two-player element to *SMB* is great fun. Because you can hit each other with bad guys, tomatoes, ten-ton weights etc. and so the game takes on a very competitive feel as opposed to a teamwork kind of thing.

As we all know it's much more fun to beat your friend at something than to work with him. I know full well that sucking up monsters and jumping on platforms isn't going to appeal to everyone, but the brothers' gaseous certainly provides fun for a couple of hours. As long as you don't plan on making a night of it, you might just find it fun too. *SM Brothers* is a pleasing starter before a lulu blown meal.



Different weapons fit in different levels. Fire, for instance, will make short work of any menacing enemy.

APACHE £25.99

A300 A386 A486 A500 A512
A1500 A2000 A2500 A3000 A3500

APACHE SOFT, 120 ANDERTON PARK
ROAD, MOKESLEY, BIRMINGHAM B13
TELEPHONE: 021 442 2060

RELEASE DATE	NOW
GENRE	ARCADE
TEAM	APACHE
CONTROLS	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE	NO
MEMORY	0.5mb

GRAPHICS	*****85%
SOUND	*****80%
LASTABILITY	*****80%
PLAYABILITY	*****81%

Fun, just as it should be.

OVERALL 80%

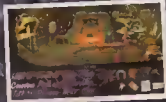
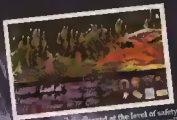
WARNING!

THIS GAME CONTAINS DANGEROUS PROPORTIONS OF HUMOUR AND WIZARDS AND DRAGONS AND GIANTS AND BARBARIANS AND OWLS AND QUAGRIDUPEDS AND DWARVES AND LAKES AND PRINCESSES AND WITCHES AND TROLLS AND GOATS AND... AND... AND SHAMEN AND WEREWOLVES AND...

What are you lowering at? To be honest, I can't continue to stare at the bits said nothing. It came as no surprise, dear reader, everything in this magic forest seemed designed to cause my anger. Only to see the bloody dwarf will tell me to nail off and a socially inept shapemorphing will pay a guilt trip on me. Banishing the shapemorphing witch and freeing Calypso the Wizard had sounded like any old computerised graphic adventure for hot rodding gamers.

Yet having savoured the aramphic romas of an ancient realm, been eaten by an amphibian and having discovered how utterly uninteresting fun and games can be, I find myself an ordinary quester.

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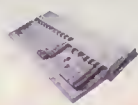
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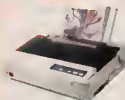
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We've all seen the little ads near the backs of mags, offering us the chance to win a fortune on the horses or the pools. Tony Dillon was a little hard up for cash, so he decided to investigate a couple.

WANT TO BET?

SOCCER EXPERT

VOITHIA SOFTWARE
£14.99

Accuracy test: Seven out of ten results predicted correctly including the only three draws

You would think, with all the computing power available to home users these days, there would be more of these things about. The



The predicted results

Soccer Expert from Powys-based Voithia Software, is one of the simplest pools prediction programs available, along with being one of the cheapest. Before you fall into the trap of assuming that, "you get what you pay for", let me tell you that this is also one of the most accurate prediction programs around.

Using a complicated system of weights and measures, it takes the current performances of all the teams in all the leagues, and runs a series of comparisons to predict the likely outcome of a match. All the leagues and

leagues are supplied up to date, although it is up to you to keep the league updated as the weeks roll by.

A class product, available from author Andreas Andreou at Voithia Software, 32 High Street, Welshpool, Powys SY21 1JP.

ORACLE ESP SOFTWARE

Accuracy test: Correctly picked eight placed horses in ten races

One sport that can definitely claim to be more predictable than soccer is horse racing, which explains the plethora of horse racing predictors around. *Oracle* is, without a doubt, the most impressive one I have ever come across. Whereas most packages of this type require you to enter every last scrap of information you can lay your hands on, *Oracle* has a surprisingly large database of



All the available courses can be viewed

courses, riders and trainers, leaving you to only tell it about the horses that are running, and then let the program do the rest.

Oracle is stunningly accurate, to the point where the author, David Somerskill no longer needs to work, living quite happily off his gambling earnings. Of course, information like this doesn't come cheap, and £75 for the initial program plus £30 for monthly updates might be a little out of some people's league, but if you're really serious about your gee gees, there's no better package to lay your hands on. Available from ESP Software, 32a Southchurch Road, Southend-On-Sea, Essex SS1 2ND. Tel: 0702 600 557.

THE TIPSTER

SIDMOUTH SOFTWARE £34.95

Accuracy test: Correctly named six placed horses in ten races

The *Tipster* from Sidmouth Software comes direct from the land of the experienced betting expert — the person who has all the systems worked out for themselves and consequently goes through all sorts of horrendous nights first thing on a Saturday morning. The package con-



The *Tipster* asks for some hefty information.

tains all the actual odds/leaves but none of the information, so you do need to spend half an hour or so scouring through the back pages of *The Sun* or *The Racing Post* to find all the information there is.

The *Tipster* comes in two different incarnations — *Tipster International* for the amateur and the more advanced and more accurate *Tipster Professional*. Both supply you with a grid, into which you enter all the information you need before keying it in on screen. Then the computer will give you the most likely horse to win, plus the best horse to lay on each way bet on. Some knowledge of horse racing is required, but it is an excellent package, well worth the money. Available from Sidmouth Software, PO Box 7, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 0TD. Tel: 0395 567073.

A WORD TO THE WISE

If you even consider spending you can't be there, or similar phrases, there are a couple of things you must consider. Firstly, none of the prediction programs on the market are guaranteed to make you money and the ones we reviewed don't claim any more than 50% accuracy, even though in our tests they scored much higher. A working knowledge of the sport concerned is a must, as these are merely aids to your own predictions — don't put £100 on *Legends Of Superhorses* to win just because a product told you to — check it out for yourself and see if your conclusions match not.

A REAL EYE OPENER! WIN A 21" COLOUR TV AND A CD32!

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How would you fancy the ultimate games set up? Your mate might think he's the donkey's ears with his NES plugged into his rusty old black and white portable TV, or that girl from down the road who has a *Space Invaders* game on her watch may think she rules the world. But they won't be a patch on you if you're one of the lucky winners in this exclusive Gravelin competition.

For two extremely fortunate readers, we have two sets of Sony 21 inch remote control colour TVs and CD32s to give away! You already know how incredible the console is, but you wait until you see it running through this fabulous Sony colour TV! You'll be the envy of your street!

Of course, you'll be wanting to know how you can get your hands on these magnificent prizes which include five exclusive Gravelin T-shirts for the lucky runners up. Simple, just answer these three easy questions

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It's Okay I've Got A TV License
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Merch). Good luck!

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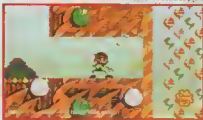


SONY

This 21" colour TV could be yours



You could win a Sony CD32



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- 1) This competition is not open to any employees of EMAP Images or Gravelin Graphics Software Limited.
- 2) Nor is it open to work experience people called Derek.
- 3) The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. We won't answer your letters either.
- 4) Closing date for all competition entries is 26th March 1994.
- 5) Answers given inside sealed envelopes will be ripped up and burned.
- 6) There is no official cash alternative to the prizes stated, but we might buy one of the TVs off you for a fiver.



Planet of the Pugs Three Girls - what a stunner!

SNAPPERAZI

ALTERNATIVE OUT NOW £25.99

If there was ever a game that could win an award for being the most sponsored event in the software industry, this would have to be it. Not only is *The Sun* newspaper behind it, but so are Fizzy Cheews and Demmie Pizzas. While it's encouraging to see



The Stars of the Low Key celebrities. Get them to shoot their poorly written for horses prizes.

idea of the topics covered. You play the Snapper, a small but witty photographer who wants to get into the world of the popstar.

To prove his worth to *The Sun* editor, he has to race around some large, jerky levels, taking pictures of some of the most meshpenn sprites ever seen, while collecting rolls of film and trying to avoid bills, shops and anything else that might try to take his money. He also needs to collect enough delicious Demmie pizzas, so he can then build a space ship to take him to the next level.

I'm sorry, but this is a really dreadful game. The joystick controls are sticky and wooden feeling, the sound effects are drab and basic, and the garish use of background colours gives the game a very confused look. I can't think of anything positive about this game at all. Even the box front looks like it was thrown together in the dark.

Hayleigh Rodgers

31%

so many large companies taking an interest in the games world, it's a shame they had to sponsor such a terrible game. No, scratch that, Snapperazi is staggeringly terrible.

Alternative have surpassed themselves with creating a game that plays on the lowest interests.

Levels like Planet Of The Pugs Three Girls and Planet Royale should give you some



SABRE TEAM AGA

KRISALIS OUT NOW £25.99



Sabre Team Aga is extremely exciting, based on the original Sabre Team. When it first appeared some 12 months ago, it was a most popular strategy game. It was really only held a corner of the market, although titles like Laser Squad seemed really to break through into the mainstream. Sabre Team Aga is very different, but it smashes down preconceptions of what a strategy game should look and play like. It is a real return and improves a work I'd very well say one has really held it back. That was the fact that it was very slow. The amount of time I actually spent playing it compared to the length I had to wait for a computer download to go through the system was too much for some people, and therefore it never really got all the credit it really deserved.

Sabre Team A1200 is a completely different kettle of fish. With the exception of a couple of levels switched about and a few other tweaks to the game, the actual gameplay and plot are the same as before. You control a team of 10 characters, choose from a roster of eight and have to go into combat areas in an SAS-style attack, taking out everything from POW camps to enemy Envoys using a combination of skill, cunning and cool-headed judgment.



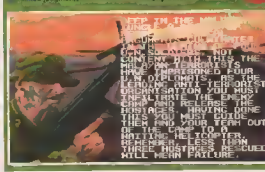
The 256 colour graphics give Sabre Team Aga a whole new look.

The graphics have been first improved since the original game, with plenty of splash and other sound effects thrown in for good measure. Best of all, though, it's waiting time has been cut almost as quickly. When you have finished your turn, you only need to wait a couple of seconds for the computer to figure out its moves, rather than the 40 or 50+ seconds of the original. Anyone who has played this game does it need me to tell you how much more playable this really makes the game.

Once a superb strategy blast that suffered from needless playability bugs, Sabre Team is now just a superb strategy blast.

Tony Dillon

89%



The intro has spacecraft flying between planets. The game is about underwater empire-building. Can anyone tell Paul Presley what's going on?

I like a good laugh, me. Especially when it's at someone else's expense. That's why I love looking at foreign games that contain all manner of translation gaffes. *S.U.B.* should be able to keep me giggling throughout the rest of Spring thanks to the sturdiness of its introductory sequence.

On the graphics are superb, it's the fact that constantly works itself across the screen that allows my wailing gear to shift out of reverse. Graphically, it has the look of one of those European PD demos that drop up month after month—the one with beautifully-rendered 3D spaceships flying through space that make people go, "Gosh, isn't it pretty?" Of course, beautiful as these spaceships are, they don't seem to have much bearing on the game itself, which, for the main part, deals with the exploration of Earth's sea bed and the manufacture of a global submersible empire.

Contemplating several other globe-minded figures, you have to take your initial supply of breads and Deep Sea Vehicles (yes, that's what the D.S.V. in SeaQuest stood for) in order to explore, expand and extract. Explore uncharted areas of the sea bed, expand your horizons to cover as much territory as possible and extract mineral wealth and turn it into an army. With an army, you see, you can embark upon a killing spree of your enemies.

However, before I get onto that I really must just go back to this whole translation thing. Some might say 'Well it's from another country, you can't expect perfect English

S.U.B.

Nice intro sequence, it just goes downhill after this. **Background:** The only thing missing is a credit marriage thanking Bill and Jack and John and Maria etc.

Well no, I wouldn't if it were being released in another country. But it isn't (well it is, but I'm talking about this version), it's being released here. If distributors are going to release a foreign game onto English-speaking shores it is their moral responsibility to translate the text into readable

AQUA-BATICS

Somehow along the lengthy line that is computer gaming history, someone

...the

rules. No matter what type of game it was, from the shoot 'em up to the strategy fare, you could be sure that it would at the very least be fun. Then at some point fun stopped being important and people started to take everything seriously. The upshot of this horrid-

doubt event is a game like S.U.B. At no point while playing it was I ever having fun.

So I could write this review in one of two ways. I could sit here and go

Left: Your home — where you build up your strength.

through each of the game's elements, analyse and assess each separately, nuance and came up with an overall impression based on the results. Or I could simply tell you that *S.U.B.* isn't fun and leave you to get on with something that is.

But I had taken the analytical route I wouldn't have told you that the in-game graphics are fairly good, but nothing special; that the music is professional at first but soon begins to grate; that the control interface could have done with being far more user-friendly; that at no point do you ever feel as though you know exactly what is going on. But that despite all of that it is very polished, has no immediately apparent flaws in its structural design and it could no doubt provide you with something of a testing challenge for a while.

Trouble is it would all be academic because it's just plain dull. It has all the enjoyment properties of cleaning somebody else's toenails. Throughout my, thankfully, brief acquaintance with it I just kept thinking, 'When can I get on with a more enjoyable assignment' and that is always a bad sign. **OT**



Just one of the skills (ahem) underway

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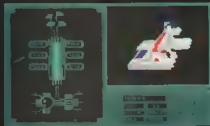
KOMPART UK LTD, GUILDFORD
HOUSE, 20 GUILDFORD ROAD, ST
ALBANS, HERTS. TEL: 0727 368005

RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
GENRE	STRATEGY
TEAM	IN-HOUSE
CONTROLS	MOUSE
NUMBER OF DISKS	3
NUMBER OF PLAYERS	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE	NO
MEMORY	1MB

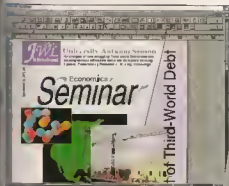
GRAPHICS	++++++75%
SOUND	++++++70%
LASTABILITY	++++++65%
PLAYABILITY	++++++50%

Second-rate strategy game

OVERALL 58%



You can't use Software this Powerful, and produce Documents this Good...

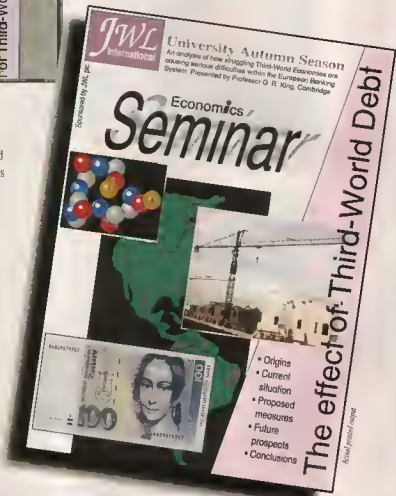


If you're looking for a quality Word Processor/Publisher that performs as well as this, you may well start by searching through PC and Apple™ Macintosh™ software catalogues.

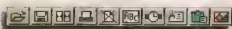
Even then though, you probably won't find a program that will combine the very best in Word Processing *and...* easy to use integrated DTP type facilities.

You certainly can't find software for your Amiga that's capable of all this...

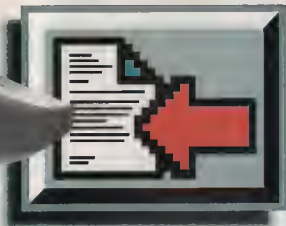
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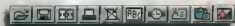
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CUA

PART 1

Simon the Sorcerer is guaranteed to make you smile,

but even in the best fairy stories things can turn nasty.

Tony Gill in the first of a two-part complete solution lays a trail through this tricky game.

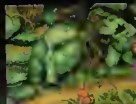
Happily, things start fairly easily, giving you free rein to move around the village and forest conversing with the trees and fauns. Sadly, you can forget about getting any help from your cop as he has no intention of leaving the comfort of his blanket. In this game, you are on your own mate.

Before leaving the wizard's house you must grab the magnet off the fridge door and get the scissors from the drawer. Walk to the nearby Blacksmith's Forge and take the rope, plus the bell-clapper which is lying on the bench. (Well, if he needed them he shouldn't have left them lying around should he?). In the nearby village you will find the Druid's house with a ladder propped up outside. As he is off somewhere, (presumably sacrificing hill-fellets and collecting virgins) now is the time to pinch his ladder and stick it under your hat. Pop inside and you'll find that our besotted friend is heavily into herbal remedies, but don't waste time trying to pinch the marijuana. It isn't for the likes of clean-cut CU AMIGA readers. What you must do is pocket the cold remedy and a specimen jar (Well you never know when you might get caught short somewhere and then you'd do anything for a specimen jar).

Well that was a lot of work, so head for the pub and see if we can either put a girl or a pint. There is a box of matches which someone has carelessly left beside the one-armed

SIMON THE SORCERER

Solution



Before you enter the darkness cave, examine the ground carefully for poison roses. Find the right rock and the secret passageway will then be revealed.

bandit which should be taken, and there is a sleeping dwarf who would look much better if you were to use the incisors on his beard. By all means try out your best chat-up lines on the girls beside the bar, but once you've realised that you aren't going to get your evil way with them, go through to the private room next door and talk to the wizards. The wizards will clue you in to the fact that to get ahead in this game you'll need to find a magical staff.

Head off into the forest to find the

Ogre who is sitting on the trail with a thorn in his foot. If you remove the thorn he'll reward you with a silver whistle which will bring the Ogre to your aid anytime in the future.

You now have the musical solution to the nasty Troll who blocks the troll bridge. Approach the troll, speak with him, and he will attempt to steal your whistle. In the commotion which follows, the Troll will foolishly blow your whistle, causing the Ogre to appear and beat ten bells off his out of him. Who says life isn't fair?

The Witch's cottage is your next part of exit. Use the well outside to get a bucket of water, then creep inside the cottage to encounter the evil one. Before you can do much in here you'll be given your marching orders and thrown out. But don't worry - You'll be back!

Meanwhile, back in the forest, there is a tree-stump which is rapidly being demolished by some chatty woodworms. Spend a few minutes talking with them and you'll find out what type of wood they spend their

night's dreaming about.

Sooner or later you'll come upon a simple girl who has foolishly swapped her Amiga for a handful of magic beans - some folk never learn. First use the bucket of water on the beans, then take the beans out of the puddle and return to the wizard's cottage. At the rear of the cottage is a large compost heap which will make an excellent place to plant the magic beans. You know what's going to happen next don't you? Sure enough, before you have time to blink, the magical beans grow into a... watermelon!



Don't be fooled by the sort in the hollow tree. He may sport a head of rubella upon the face, but if you hang around long enough he does drop quite a few beans, along with a very useful object.

Now here's a useful piece of information. This watermelon is just the object to stuff into the musical instrument belonging to that nifty fool in the forest and once he's gone you'll be able to pick up the squeaky-phon. Clever isn't? Don't tell anyone, just keep it under your hat.

The next weird, but fixable, character we are going to visit is the swampdunk who lives in the hollow tree. As he has gone to the trouble of preparing lots of swamp stew it





It's a silly conversation that you find, then there is nothing better to have a bit of a thinking time in the next pass. While you're there, make sure you find the treasure chest as the king's treasure is hidden in the castle.

Let's see having secured all of the most useful, the remaining two real gems to find are the diamonds, leading you to discover the hidden hidden under the wooden chest.



Right! There has been one too many occasions when the Troll has been captured by those pesky silly girls, so now he is fighting back, unless he gets a real good driver, there will be no more 'Trip-Tapping' over this troll bridge.

would be childish to refuse to eat some, so grab a spoon and tuck in. There, that was delicious wasn't it? No? Well perhaps the second bowl will taste better. Ask for a second helping, but this time you should put the stew into the spoonman jar for later. (This is a long game and you may need a snack before we finish.) If you continue to risk bowls of stew, eventually the nation will run out, and your food will be forced to leave the house to get more ingredients. Now is your chance to move the chest and find the treacherous beneath. On the jolly below the house you will find that a loose plank prevents you from going any further, so it's back to the forest for you.

Slitting alongside the path you'll find a woodcutter who will give you a magic deflector if you promise to help him search for the magic mirror orb. Being a typical adventurer, you should promise him anything as long as you can get something for nothing.

Up until now we've only spoken with strange folk who seem to be stupid, so perhaps you should seek out this game's Help Centre. In the forest is a wise old owl who lives in a hollow tree. Repeated questioning of this fantastic, feathered font of facts will reveal many of this game's secrets - although you'll have to search for the gems amongst a load of dross. Keep a sharp eye on the owl and you will notice that the shock of seeing you will cause something to

the princess into a pig. Pick up the pig and return to the village.

Just past the Dwarf's house is a picturesque cottage with a door made out of trifles. Use the pig on the door and it will gobble a hole through it in a flash. Inside the cottage you can collect the bee-keeper's hat and smoke-gun. Go outside to the beehive and wear the hat. Use the matches to light the smoke-gun, then use the smoke to calm the bees, (or at least chase them senseless!) then take the wax from the hive.

Ho! on your lips, and a dwarf's beard on your chin, head for the entrance to the diamond mine. The first thing that's needed to get into this area is the password - BEER - which is written on the underside of the rock found just outside the cave. Once you arrive at the bottom of the mine you can offer the barrel of beer to the guard and then help him carry it down into the cellar. The fat dwarf who is asleep on the floor can be persuaded to roll over if you tickle him with the owl's feather, and this will reveal a key. Rip back upstairs to the excited dwarf then down for other staircases to where the three dwarves are sleeping. There is a hook hanging from a post which you can pick up. Use this hook with the rope and they will combine into one item. (It's a bit like a soap on a rope, but whatever you do, don't attempt to wash your bottom with it!)

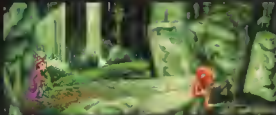
Use the key to open the nearby door and you'll find yourself in the diamond vault. The guard is easily



fall from his plastron. Picking up this item will be 'a feather in your cap'.

In the eastern half of the forest is the crossroads. Take the south-east path and this will bring you to the bees of a tower. There is a large bell here which is one 'ding' short of a 'dong', so use the clapper to repair it. Operate the bell and this will make a rope appear. Climb the rope into the tower and get into some serious snogging with the princess who lives there. Normally a kiss from a fairy tale character would make things better but a peek from your fair lips will turn

things less than you make your stomach cut, but there are some strange characters in this game who would be glad if a head-butt. 'Well to the west of the state of the kingdom and you'll find yourself a Kabermen with quite a useful catch.



Time for another drink I think, so 'hegg' back to the pub and order a pint of whatever suits your fancy from the barman. When he stops to find you a glass from beneath the counter quickly bung up the beer barrel with the wax. The barman will now find that no beer comes out of the barrel so he will assume that it needs changing. The barman will take the barrel outside and dump it. The barman will give you a free beer voucher as compensation. You are now able to rip outside and pick up a barrel of beer. If only life were like that!

The next characters we should sort out are the dwarves who live in the cave in the centre of the forest. So with a song in your heart, a 'H



tribed with the beer voucher and he'll reward you with a diamond. Take a trip back to the village, and with a bit of arguing you'll be able to sell your glittering prize for 20 gold pieces to the peasant snatched by the duck pond - having done all this work you might be feeling peckish and be tempted to sample that swamp stew in the speckman jar. After all it can't be as awful as you remembered it. Oh yes it is! I suggest you return to the crossroads. Then go to the edge of the cavern. Find the vines which are almost hidden in the bottom left of the screen and climb down them. Here you will find a Gatum who is fishing in the river. Offer the swamp stew to him and you will be rewarded with a magical orb.

Exciting isn't it? I can hardly wait for the final instalment next month!

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THE GAMES MACHINE

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Editor of CU AMIGA

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ONE MAGAZINE

88%

THE ONE MAGAZINE

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and a great laugh. Budget
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ality
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12



You are the
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16 levels of
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flowing action
in an effort to
confront the evil Midan, if you make
it to Midan's Lair you will meet your
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VFM



BUDGET

Can't afford any new games this month? Don't fret, dear reader, there are some top re-releases this month, as Hayleigh Rodgers explains.

ASSASSIN

TEAM 17 CLASSIC OUT NOW £10.99

Even though Assassin was generally regarded as the best example of how to do a *Strider* clone on the Amiga, it didn't sell particularly well. However, because Team 17 are the soft ware equivalent of the Midland Bank, they've listened to what the public didn't like about the original Assassin, landed it up a bit and re-released it at a new easy-to-afford price.

As you may have guessed, the game's plot remains the same. Take control of the Assassin and make your way through four massive zones, with the ultimate goal being the destruction of Midan - a twisted, power-crazy being intent on causing havoc. On the way to Midan's base you'll encounter a range of crazed soldier-types which have to be taken out before they manage to destroy you. There are power-ups galore to be collected throughout your mission, which boost your firepower and make things just that little bit easier. The most noticeable difference between this game and the original Assassin is that the main character now carries a more useful gun, as opposed to his boomerang. This makes the game far more immediate - you no longer have to creep slowly through the levels if you don't want to (although you know what they say about foots rushing in) because your Assassin's newly acquired weapon is so effective you can often take out adversaries before they even know you're there.

There can be no doubting that Assassin is an extremely polished platform game and at this price is well worth a look. But it's certainly not worth an extra tenner if you purchased the full price version.

80%



CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

KIXX XL OUT NOW £14.99

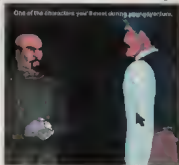
Delphine may be remembered most fondly for *Another World* and *Flashback*, but this graphic adventure released between the two is in some ways their finest achievement. *Cruise* casts you as Raoul Dussentel, a detective invited to spend some time getting away from it all on a luxury liner. However, your tranquil holiday is spoiled prematurely when your host is murdered, throwing you headfirst into a complex web of intrigue in search of the murderer.

Solving the crime isn't easy. There are numerous other characters roaming the vessel and most have a secret or two to hide. Apart from entering the other passengers' apartments and rummaging through their luggage and accessories to discover clues, you need to spend time eavesdropping on conversations and employing devious cross-examining if you are to get anywhere at all. To this end, things can become frustrating because you often need to be in the right place at the right time - something which has never worked well in graphic adventures. After all, there's nothing more frustrating than being punished because you didn't get from A to B within a strict time limit, is there?

But it's *Cruise's* atmosphere that helps to negate this particular gripe. Graphically, it's nothing short of stunning - all the characters move extremely fluidly and the use of cinematic close-ups and the occasional black and white flashback sequences which detail events prior to the cruise really do add to the overall tension.

It's been two-and-a-half years since the game's original release and it's aged really well - it is certainly on par with the likes of *Simon the Sorcerer* and *Beneath a Steel Sky*. And at this price it deserves to sell in droves. Do yourself a favour - buy this now. You won't regret it.

90%



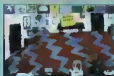
One of the characters you'll meet during your journey.

LEISURE SUIT LARRY

KIXX XL OUT NOW £14.99

I don't know about you, but there's nothing I like more than watching American situation comedies. They really are the funniest things ever, I reckon, and the way most inject a degree of sentimentality into the proceedings is not only heart-warming but reaffirms my faith in the human animal.

I am, of course, funny. American humour is generally as funny as watching the war develop in Bosnia, so it was with some reluctance that I loaded up this, the first in the long-running series of adventures revolving around the hilarious exploits of Larry. His comical attempts to secure true love (or, failing that, a quick wriggle) have apparently kept thousands entertained during countless breakouts and those of you who missed his first outing can now snap it up at a



Would you take a chance on Larry?

relatively low price. But would you want to?

The answer, in a word, is no. Unless you like dated visuals, an antiquated player interface and non-troublesome puzzles.

Like *Cruise for a Corpse*, some of these brain teasers are time-based which don't exactly complement the crude parser (you often lose valuable seconds trying to get the game to do exactly what you want). But the difference here is that *Leisure Suit Larry* doesn't have any redeeming features to compensate for the odd frustrating moment, meaning that you're more likely to use the disks as ashtrays rather than load the damn game up again. Do yourself a favour - pass this by.

50%

LASER SQUAD

KIXX OUT NOW £9.99

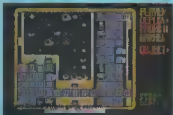
I get this out of the way right now. *Laser Squad* is an updated version of *Rebelstar Raiders*, an old Spectrum game. But, hey!, don't worry you pretty little selves because - la-dan! - it's great!

For you linnar you get five sci-fi scenarios spread over seven difficulty levels, all complemented by some great strategic action. It's your job to work your way through increasingly tough space battles, blasting anything looking remotely hostile and picking up additional items. You instruct your band of mercenaries using either the joystick or the keys to make the required selections and by ploughing through a series of sub-menus you can go into greater detail. Battle tactics, attack formations and so on play an integral part in any successes you may have so it's important to experiment with minor details like this if you want to get anywhere.

Okay, so it may not sound like the most enthralling gaming experience ever (especially if you've never played this kind of thing), but for some reason *Laser Squad* is immensely enjoyable. There's a great deal of satisfaction to be gleaned from senselessly killing alien slime baskets just because they look a bit funny — even arcade punts will gain a large chunk of enjoyment from this budget release. And you can't ask for much more than that, can you?



Watch out! Chances are...



82%

GUNSHIP

KIXX XL OUT NOW £12.99

In these days of sophisticated flight sims with ever more impressive external views, Gouraud shading and slick presentation it becomes increasingly disheartening to reexperience the plane games of yesteryear. *Gunship*, the prequel to *Gunship 2000* (obviously) was originally released in 1988, and unfortunately it shows. In terms of options and things to blow up, everything is present and correct. You get to equip your chopper with whatever weapons you feel are necessary for the mission and combat zone you've selected and then climb into the blue yonder for a bit of blasting action.

But it's the way the game is presented that gives away *Gunship*'s age. Flight sim enthusiasts were obviously more easily impressed back then, so the game's graphical style may not have seemed out of place. Now, however, *Gunship* looks, well, like a C64 game. There's no complex shading, the 3D is slow and jerky and most of the sound effects are pathetically weedy.

The only thing good about *Gunship* is that without it *Gunship 2000*, the best helicopter sim to date, wouldn't have seen the light of day. Let's just thank heavens for that and say no more... shall we?



Look at this very sparse landscape. Or, second thoughts, do it.

45%

KING'S QUEST

KIXX OUT NOW £12.99

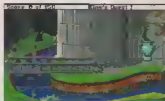
Hurrah! Another ancient Sierra release. And what a crock of pooch it is. But before we dwell in opinions, let us talk about the plot. You are Sir Graham, the bravest knight in the lord-dom of Davenry. Three valuable treasures have been swept from the King's stores and they have been charged with the task of retrieving them. Do this and you'll become heir to the throne.

Even if you offered me the position of God I wouldn't have scripted this challenge. It's not that the puzzles are obscure, it's just that the game's origin — the PC — is blatantly obvious. Thankfully, Sierra recently realised that their conversion process leaves a little to be desired and have tied-up a deal with Revolution Software whereby they completely rewrite Sierra's original code, using the Amiga's capabilities to their fullest.

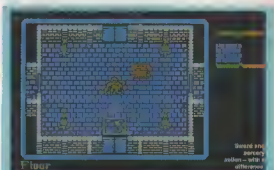
Unfortunately, this doesn't really help us here. The game moves like a small Superflued and stapled to the floor, resulting in too many moments of lengthy disk accessing, and the characters aren't much faster. After you've attempted to cross three screens it soon becomes too much to bear and the prospect of holding down the two Amiga keys and Control is a tempting offer.

Why on earth Kixx XL have decided to re-release this tedious effort at the same time as *Crusoe* for a Corbse is quite frankly baffling. In terms of quality and enjoyment, the two couldn't be further apart, meaning that one of the pair isn't likely to be very successful. And I think we all know which one I'm talking about.

45%



Sir Graham begins his half-hour trek across a screen.



Floor

Swamp and victory column - what a difference

LORDS OF CHAOS

BUZZ OUT NOW £9.99

Like the sound of *Laser Squad* do you? Well, come on down for what is essentially more of the same as we check out *Lords of Chaos* this month's second Buzz release.

Just swap all the super-hard space geezers with more weed looking but still quite powerful wizards and such like, exchange the beefy weapons-based combat system with more sedate but equally efficient spellcasting, replace the word 'Laser' with 'Lords Of' and 'Squad' with 'Chaos' and you've pretty much got the idea.

And that's pretty much the size of it, I could, if I wanted to, go into how you use either the joystick or the keys to make the required selections, and by wading through a series of sub-menus you can go into greater detail, but I'm sure you've seen it all before and probably weren't that interested in the first place.

Okay, we've determined that the two games are all but identical, and this is perhaps the problem. You'll notice that both *Laser Squad* and *Lords of Chaos* have been marketed identically, mainly because the two games really are very good. But what confuses me is why Buzz are releasing them during the same month because I can't see why anyone would want to buy both when just one provides a great deal of playing time. So, basically, you pays your money, you takes your choice.

82%

DISCOVERY

TEL: 0274 880060

UNBELIEVABLE GIVEAWAY

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EST 1991

DEMOS

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2. Read the text.

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DTT Cold Chamber
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SLIDES

51. *Horn In Shes In*
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DON'T FORGET TO CLAIM YOUR FREE GIFT
WHILE STOCKS LAST

ITEM NO. POW
7/20/05 4:30 PM, 170A

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Adventure Helpline



VAMP

Vampyra: tasteful, discreet, and pure as the driven slush. Hold onto yourself. Our girl is back to solve all of your little gaming problems.

KGB

I am completely stuck in KGB from Virgin. I have got out of the stuffy room and got all of my equipment back. The problem is that when I get back to Department P, Major Vovlov says that I didn't find out the nature of the gangster's activities. When I go back to Verto's list he always shoots me no matter what I do. Please help me. Jamie Aitken, Musselburgh.

Did you use the polaroid white piece of paper? I like polaroid cameras because it avoids all of those funny looks and drinking. I used to get from the staff at the chemists when I went in to pick up my snapshots.

As I recall you can deal with Verto by simply hiding behind the door when he returns. (He should have gone out when the American sets off the alarm.) When he returns, attack his straight away. He's got a blue piece of paper on him which you should also photograph and then return to him.

MONKEY ISLAND

I'm having a terrible problem with that old Monkey Island. How do I get the mug o' grog to the prison without the mug mulling? And then how do I melt the coil lock? P.S. Any chance of a job in your mag? James Pados, Ipswich.

There are loads of mugs on Monkey Island, and more than enough in the CU AMIGA

Monkey Island - everyone's favourite cup 'n' tea or grog.

office thank you very much, so we err... hardly don't need any more! Why don't you pack up a few of the mugs and then we turn one after another as you make your way to the jail?

MEGATRAVELLER

Your eyes are deep and blue, like a lake on a moonlit night. Your hair, the colour of ravens wings in flight.

Your lips the seductive colour of blood, that flows. A body to die for, and you know your style shows. Vampyra, the lone candle lighting the dark window of my heart.

You have aroused feelings in me that I haven't felt for three hundred years. You also make my lungs tingle.

As you seem to be, not only very beautiful, but also highly intelligent, perhaps you can help me. My problem is that I can't find the ancient experts in Megatraveller II. Yours for ever, Count Vladimir, Bessareb

You old monster I would love to help, but I must confess I've fooled you. I contacted the software supplier, but even they don't have a solution. To make matters worse, the American software company who wrote the game appears to have gone out of business. Your only hope is that someone very thin please for help and writes to me with the solution. Any offers?

ELVIRA - MISTRESS OF THE DARK

Nice earnings! I was wondering if you could help me with that aged boast of a game - Elvira.

I need the Crusader's sword from the tomb in the chapel. I've tried giving the crown to the Crusader but that doesn't work. Zeph, Mid-Glemorgen.



What has Elvira got that I haven't got more of? You do realise that none of what you see is her own. Once you get inside the Chapel you must take the prayer book. Insert Elvira's ring into the cross. Enter the chamber under the altar and get the crown. Face the crusader wall and use the prayer scroll on the wall. Put the crown on the crusader's head and take the sword.

KNIGHTMARE

I would like to bet that most of your problem mail is from people who play Knightmare. I am having a lot of trouble. This game really is a nightmare. I've got to a place called the prison and I have explored everywhere but I don't know what to do next. I have tried using spells from the wand of magic and other items but they don't seem to help me open the prison. Can you give me some help?

Alex Doe, London

If you really believe that most of my mail is asking about Knightmare then you don't know much about CU AMIGA readers.

The first thing you'll see when you enter the prison is a porthole which leads you back to Mr. Childs through a false wall. In the prison there is a door which

Amiga. When I went to a shop to buy Police Quest 31 was told that it had been removed from sale. I am desperate to get hold of this game. Could you possibly find out whether it can be bought anywhere?

David Smith, London.

When I read that the game had been removed from sale I was very worried in case this was some form of censorship. Goodness, they might even try to censor me next! However you get me going for no reason. And you know how much I hate that...

Sierra no longer produces games for the Amiga, but their back catalogue is still available if you contact them directly. You can either order via a credit card on 0743 303171 or write to Sierra-On-Line Ltd, 4, Brewery Court, The Old Brewery, Thetford, Norfolk NG21 5AJ. Police Quest III costs £29.99.

Incidentally you may like to know that some new Sierra games may appear on the Amiga, because other companies



Indiana Jones - where 'treasure, adventure, excitement and talking parrots abound

left. Place the condenser on the left-hand hole. Touch the right-hand hole and this will dislodge the pendulum which is in the middle hole.

Use the pendulum to find the hidden gold in the underground and give this to the Oracle.

That will get you a piece of rope which you can use with the curved branch to make a bow.

With a bow and the arrows you'll be able to knock down the walnut. Use the sword to open the walnut and release the fairy. I'm sure the fairy will be so grateful he'll show you something. Good!

SUSPICIOUS CARGO

I've been stuck for a very long time in Suspicious Cargo. My problem is that I cannot get into Hyperspace. I've completed the 'puzzle' of the DMS board where you have to rotate the hyperspace computer, but I can't make the jump to hyperspace without the police catching me.

Ian Lloyd, Carlisle.

This game is too boring to even warrant a reply request to here are the bare facts.

Run Bridge, Examine Hyperspace Governor, Insert Hyperspace Controller, Push Hyperspace Initiator Switch, Pull Hyperspace Lever, Push Hyperspace Lever, Run Auxiliary Control Room, Play And Solve Puzzle Run Bridge, Pull Hyperspace Lever, Push Lever.

I've pulled a lot less, for a lot more fun, I can tell you.

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

My problem is with Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis. For the past three weeks I have been talking to a parrot outside the temple of Tikal, but I have never been given the opportunity of saying 'hello' as indicated in CU AMIGA (February 1993), so I'm unable to get past Sternhart and enter the temple. I

could help me on this point I would be really grateful.

John Gough, Chesham.

Getting past Sternhart is simply being able to give him the name he asks for. All you need to know is that the parrot gives you the answer you need if you simply talk to it.

Sooner or later you can say 'Name', (or something similar) and the reply that the parrot gives you is the answer. Save the game and try all of the options the parrot gives.

Well, that's it, playmate for another month. I'm sorry to stick around, but don't fret. I'll be back next month with more answers to your gaming queries. As a parting gift I'll leave you with one final piece of advice: if you are stuck between a choice of two exits, push the one you've never tried before!

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Write to us your little problem and send it to our game envelope to: Dear Vintages, CU Amiga, Policy Court, 30-32 Farnley Lane, London EC1A 3AU.



In Knightmare everywhere a secret dream is just Alex Doe's true London.

leads to a safe room with a key inside. On the other side of this area there is another false wall. Go through this wall to find a switch which opens one of the prison doors.

Inside the prison is a key-hole which opens an exit behind the false wall with the buttons. Now all you have to do is kill the hob-goblin and take the sword.

SIERRA - LOST IN THE POLICE FILES?

I am writing to you not because I need help with an adventure game, but because I need help finding one. I have completed lots of the Sierra on-line adventures including, Larry 1 2 and 3, Space Quest 1, 2 and 3 and Kings Quest 1 and 2.

I played these games on an Atari ST. When I heard that Sierra were no longer making games for the Atari I was shocked so I bought an

are building to do the conversions (Kings Quest V7 is quite likely to be one game on the cards).

WEEN

I am on desk three of Ween. I am in a piece where there are three holes, a pendulum, three arrows and a walnut up a tree. In my inventory I have a fule, ring, three grains of sand, a tree, copper ball and a necklace. What do I do next? Please can you help me?

Paul Newton, Newcastle.

This part of the game involves rescuing a fairy from a nest. I'm sure there is a secret key in there somewhere, but I can't think of it right now.

I assume you have a sword, even though you don't mention it. You must use the sword to cut the branches on the right, and the 'curved branch on the

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The CU AMIGA Top rated accolade for non-games products means over 90%. They will definitely be worth the money and are likely to act as a benchmark for future releases.

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Schedule Pro is the master addition to the package. You can use it to search any script or program (including Quarterback of course) at any time up to 6000 years in the future!

QUARTERBACK 6.0

As more and more Amiga owners buy hard drives, the potential for them to lose data is ever increasing. Some sort of ordered back-up of data is the logical step, and no program has a better reputation for reliability in this area than Quarterback.

This latest version boasts quite a number of modifications, ranging from, incidentally unimportant ones such as menus being tidied up, to major enhancements such as the addition of a new automated back-up mode.

The program is very easy to use. For starters, all infrequently used options have been taken off the main screens and tucked away in menus so that the main work area is as uncluttered as possible.

You can perform two types of back-up - Selective or Complete. It shouldn't take any great act of genius to work out the difference between the two. Complete automatically backs up everything on the selected device without requiring you to go through any of the selection screens. Selective on the other hand, gives you the option to specify the files to be backed up. You can do this manually or by telling the program to include those files which are new or have been changed since a certain date. In fact there is an entire back-up filter screen where you can stipulate complex criteria for including and excluding any of the files in a back-up.

Once you've decided what data is going to be backed-up, you can also specify where and how it will be stored. You may choose to save to any device, and the data may be written as an AmigaDOS file, or in the program's format.

You can also specify the compression ratio to be used. The higher the ratio, the slower the back-up (and restore) speed. If you choose to back-up to floppy disks, the program can automatically spread the back-up across as many disks as the job requires. Fortunately the disks don't need to be pre-formatted so you can use new disks fresh out of their boxes if you like.

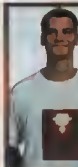
Incidentally, because Quarterback automatically spreads large files across as many as are needed, the program is also ideal as a way of transferring files bigger than 901k files from one hard disk to another. Smaller files will fit onto a single disk anyway.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the most significant new program features is a nifty stand alone program which will perform automated back-ups for you. Called Schedule Pro, the program can be used to automatically execute any DOS or Amiga program (including launching a file or partial back-up). Once loaded, Schedule Pro will sit in memory quietly clock watching, waiting to execute whatever programs are in its "Must do" list. The "Must do" list is a summary of all the commands you've given it, anything from loading a program, to reminding you about someone's birthday. It can initiate commands hourly, daily, monthly, yearly or on a one-off basis.

Quarterback is already the de facto back-up program on the Amiga. Now it's become even more powerful and even more user-friendly.

Available from: Meridian Distribution, Esai House, Esai Road Industrial Estate, London, SW19 1AH. Tel: 081 543 3500. Price £74.95.

88%



T-SHIRT PRINTING KIT

A couple of years ago, we introduced a special t-shirt from Carl Elefanten which had your print designs made on heavy paper, and then coated with ink. It was a T-Shirt. The only problem was that the ink wouldn't even last a wash!

Now a new company has come up with an entirely different and more durable approach to the job. Dull Marketing are distributing special paper which allows owners of virtually any printer to produce full colour designs which last as long as the ink on the material, and last you tell you, not only does it work well, but the results look great!

There are two types of paper, and for dot matrix printers, one for ink jets, a third for thermal wax ribbon printers and a final type for desktop laser printers and photocopiers. The paper is very smooth to the touch and is actually a composite consisting of 80% high quality paper and a semi-transparent membrane.

In theory, the paper is used exactly like ordinary printer paper in as much as you

Full motion video



Up until recently, the thought of being able to view feature

films stored on a standard compact disk was considered "pie in the sky" stuff but not any more - Jason Holborn gets a taste of the future with Commodore's new CD-32 FMV cartridge.

MOVIES, MOVIES, MOVIES!

As to the case with all new technology, the success of the VideoCD format will undoubtedly rest on the industry's ability to convince the less movie-shy that it's going to be worth their while releasing top film titles on VideoCD. After all, what's the point in having an "all-singing, all-dancing" bit of video wizardry if there's nothing to play on it? Thankfully, the situation's pretty much less moot, as a glut of new movies studios have already announced on Internet in the form. Already such big names as Disney and Columbia have already played their names on the dotted line. It all goes well, an abridged new list of titles such as Jurassic Park and Last Action Hero making their way to VideoCD. The price of VideoCD movies is still being argued over but it seems likely that they will range from \$16.99 to \$19.99 for the really big titles.

Just to get the ball rolling, Philips sold Paramount Pictures vast sums of money to get them to release a number of their top films on VideoCD so that Philips would have something to show on their new FMV-equipped system, the CDi. Thanks to MPEG-1 being an industry standard, however, CD32 owners can reap the rewards of Philips' last-minute. Here's a list of the titles that were either available or planned at the time of going to press.

Top Gun - Released Dec 2 '92

The Hunt for Red October - *Paramount*

Wayne World - *Cinead*

Fatal Attraction - *The Unintentional*

Raiders of the Lost Ark - *Independent*

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom - *Universal*

Star Trek V - *Universal*

Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country

This may seem a rather small list, but it's impressive considering how when you consider the small size of the VideoCD market at present. This list doesn't include the large number of music VideoCDs that are being released either - titles such as Bryan Adams' *Waking Up the Neighbours* and Ben Jelen's *Keep the Faith* are only a small selection of what is promised. Finding a standard that handles

VideoCDs is still at a problem at the moment - the only company that we could find that had any VideoCDs in stock was Gordon Hammond Computers who kindly loaned us the movies featured within this review. For more information, contact Gordon Hammond Computers on 0773 836781.

Just a few of the many titles available on VideoCD



It's been a long time coming, but finally, Full Motion Video (FMV to the baths!) is a reality on the Amiga thanks to the launch of Commodore's new FMV cartridge for the CD32. Unless you make a habit of keeping a watchful eye on either Philips' CDI or indeed the PC multimedia market, chances are that you may not have encountered FMV before. The basic idea is that by simply plugging an FMV cartridge into the back of your machine the CD32 is suddenly transformed into a state-of-the-art FMV unit capable of playing movies direct from standard Compact Discs (CD).

Commodore have tried on several occasions to come up with their own FMV solution in the form of CDXL and AVM, but neither managed to quite reach the sort of quality required to match a conventional VHS player. Now that the industry has agreed on the MPEG-1 standard for CD-based FMV movies, however, Commodore have jumped on the technology required to take advantage of it in double-quick time. Unlike CDXL, FMV movies are certainly no poor relation to a conventional VHS video player - most FMV movies match and in certain cases even surpass the picture quality of a swash Super VHS video player. Combine this with the high quality sound that is the hallmark of the CD medium and you've got a home entertainment system that can trade punches with any consumer video player.



THE MOVIE GAME

Commodore's FMV unit consists of a rather bland-looking sealed box of electronics that contains all the necessary hardware to decode and display the compressed MPEG video signals stored on a VideoCD - the heart of this silicon beauty is a 40MHz video decompression engine which is backed up by an equally poky 26MHz DSP chip (at last, DSP makes it's way to the Amiga).

Installing the FMV cartridge inside your CD32 is pretty straightforward, all you have to do is to remove the single screw that holds on the CD32's back panel, slide in the FMV unit until it fits snugly inside your CD32 and then fit it into place using the screw you removed earlier. Such operations always sound a lot easier on paper than they actually are in practice but thankfully this is one upgrade that even the greenest beginner could probably handle.

Once you've got the FMV unit safely installed, you'll probably want to try to see what all the fuss is about. Commodore thankfully include a disk with the FMV unit that shows it off, but you'll need to buy special MPEG-1 disks to be able to really see it in action. If you load a normal CD32 disk that doesn't take advantage of the FMV unit, the cartridge's presence will be completely hidden. In theory at least, any standard MPEG-1 disk should work on the CD32 FMV unit even if the CD32 isn't specifically mentioned on the disk's packaging. This isn't true of all MPEG disks, however, any disk that is interactive (an FMV game like *Top Gun*) or the CD-I, for example) will not work. For general movies, however, compatibility should be very high indeed.



It's square, it's slim, it's a Full Motion Video cartridge

POPCORN TIME!

Playing an MPEG movie, such as those that are currently available from Philips (a full list can be found within the box opposite) is very simple indeed. All you have to do is to place the first disk into the CD32's drive, reset and after a couple of seconds a selection screen appears that lists all the available movie tracks. Surprisingly, although most MPEG movies are broken up into separate tracks (act one, act two etc) this selection screen usually shows only two tracks – the movie company's ten second trailer and the film itself.

Splitting an MPEG movie up into a series of separate tracks does allow FMV one major advantage over a conventional VHS video player; instant access to any section of a movie. Say, for example, you wanted to watch only the last 15 minutes of your favourite film. If you were to watch it on a VHS player, you'd have to manually – and rather haphazardly – wind the tape forward until you found the section you were interested in. With FMV, however, you can instantly skip to the section of the movie that is closest to the bit you wanted to watch. The other great advantage of FMV is its freeze-frame facility because the FMV unit works with digital data, freeze-frame screens are always lock solid with none of the 'juddered out' and the loss of picture sync normally associated with VHS tapes.

PROBLEMS

FMV is not without its problems, but these are imposed by current limitations in available technology rather than Commodore's FMV cartridge.

The picture quality of FMV movies is as good as it'll make your eyes pop with *Top Gun* in Tron. Colour appears to be suitably improved.

FMV EXPLAINED

The high price tag for this has been responsible for many of its early great investments – the CD player, the television, the VHS video recorder etc – have been dragging about squeezing full motion video pictures onto CD for many years now but it wasn't until 1989 that development began on the MPEG-1 technology that forms the heart of the CD-32's FMV cartridge. Developing such high technology proved to be just too much for even the likes of the massive Japanese conglomerates that dominate the consumer electronics market and so, instead the decision of a very forward thinking chap by the name of Leonardo Chiariglione, an affiliate of over 200 different companies, set to work on the MPEG-1 technology.

The development of MPEG-1 owes a great deal to the existence of the JPEG image compression standard which had already found its way into the Amiga within image processing programs such as ASOC's Art Department Professional. Adapting the JPEG standard to work on FMV was certainly no mean feat, after all, JPEG is designed for single static images, not a whole series of moving images that have to be loaded and played at a rate of 25 frames per second. The MPEG group finally managed to adapt the JPEG standard using a technique that is rather similar to the system used with the Amiga's own 'Action' file format. The basic theory is that MPEG frames are not compressed in their entirety – instead only the discrete areas of a frame that differ from the previous frame are compressed using with a series of vectors that tell the MPEG hardware where the small compressed sections are to be placed onto the screen. The rest of the image is simply borrowed from the previous frame.

These are obviously a lot more involved but the payoff of all this video trickery is a staggering compression ratio: at around 10:1 with some frames being decompressed and then encoded into a video signal in less than 150 milliseconds. The development of MPEG isn't stopping here, either – already the efforts are hard at work on the MPEG-2 and MPEG-4 standard, the latter of which looks set to be used by communications companies such as BT for video telephony and teleconferencing. The great thing about FMV is that it is modular and so an enhanced version of the MPEG standard could be added without still providing full compatibility with the existing MPEG-1 disks.

The VideoCD format really is aimed at the consumer that wants a high-quality alternative to VHS. But the inability to record your favourite songs onto a MPEG disk will stop VideoCD from taking over from the VHS video recorder altogether. No doubt it is only a matter of time before the bottling machine to produce FMV units capable of 'encoding' video on an MPEG disk but don't hold your breath – I personally wouldn't expect to see this sort of technology being made available (and affordable) for another two years and even then they're being rather optimistic.

Unlike standard audio CDs, VideoCDs are a lot



With the arrival of FMV, the Amiga CD32 boldly goes where no games console has before.

more susceptible to dirt, dust and grease too so it's important that you look after VideoCDs – I recently attempted to play a VideoCD which refused point blank to be recognised by the CD32 – after several minutes of head-scratching. I eventually found that the problem was being caused by a very tiny fingerprint on the CD's surface. Audio CD players don't really care about this sort of thing because less data is being processed and the timing is less critical but FMV players absolutely hate even the smallest smudges!

Gripes aside, I can honestly say that Commodore's FMV unit is easily the most impressive (and certainly the most important) product to hit the market for many years. Combine the CD32's obvious power with its impressive price advantage over the competition (a similarly equipped CD system will cost you more) and Commodore have a sure-fire hit on their hands. Let's just hope that both the major film studios and Amiga software developers jump on the bandwagon so we'll get not only some great MPEG films, but some great MPEG games too! **CU**

COMMODORE £199.95



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EASE OF USE

Once the FMV unit is installed, turning MPEG discs is child's play. **★★★★★★★★★★★★92%**

VALUE FOR MONEY

May seem rather expensive but this is leading edge stuff. **★★★★★★★★★★★★82%**

EFFECTIVENESS

Brilliant picture quality, rock solid freeze frame and CD-quality sound. What more could a video disc ask for? **★★★★★★★★★★★★94%**

FLEXIBILITY

All the features it's restricted to playing films, but there's no reason why software developers couldn't produce interactive FMV games. **★★★★★★★★★★★★92%**

INNOVATION

This is absolutely state of the art technology, there's nothing else on planet Earth that even comes close! **★★★★★★★★★★★★99%**

Easily the most important Amiga product to be released for years.

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Multimedia on the cheap? John Kennedy puts two budget-priced video and audio systems, head to head.

As we are all dragged into the world of multimedia, it becomes increasingly clear that the two areas of graphics and sound are coming closer and closer together. Two companies have released budget-priced hardware to capitalise on this trend - VideoMaster and Sound And Vision. Although both have similar specifications, they work in totally different ways. CU AMIGA put them to the test.

VIDEOMASTER



Real-time moving computer video is still a dream for many, but HiSoft are doing their best to make the dream a reality with the release of VideoMaster. AGA. Originally, a much under rated A500-only peripheral from Microdeal, HiSoft have taken over the hardware end and added a PCMCIA slot. My major criticism of the A500 unit was the fact that it tied up the expansion slot on the side, preventing the use of any extra memory or hard drives - both essential when dealing with moving video. Now on the A1200, using the PCMCIA slot is fine by me: most expansions can be done internally. It's possible to fit huge hard drives, 68030 accelerators and ridiculous amounts of RAM with out even touching the PCMCIA slot.

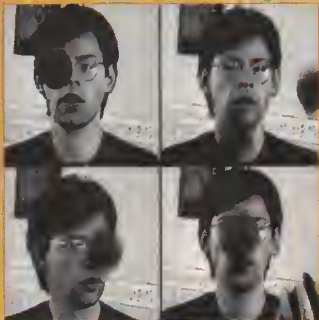
The good old A500 also sports a card slot, and VideoMaster will work fine with it too. Of course, a hard drive or extra memory isn't essential to use VideoMaster, but boy they're a good idea. When you start to digest frames at the rate of 25 a second with a good quality soundtrack, 640k of RAM soon starts to be a limit. And it won't take long to fill an 85Mb hard drive either with data files of this size. Did I say 25 frames per second there? Yup, sure did - VideoMaster will grab frames at 25, 12 and eight per second or slower, directly into memory with an accompanying soundtrack. On an A1200 with an extra 4Mb of RAM, this allows for well over 600 frames. The images can be replayed at any speed which makes for some interesting viewing. VideoMaster is the cheapest piece of hardware that passes the 'juggle test' - a particularly strict benchmark I devised myself.

Before you start talking acronyms such as FMV, CDROM and MPEG, bear in mind that VideoMaster's images are quarter screen 16 shade grey scale, which is far from VHS quality. They are, however, big enough to be recognisable, and a sound and vision head-and-shoulders

ONE on ONE



VideoMaster can grab in 16 colours



A good way of testing the speed of a digitiser is to grab a sequence of a page. Working at 25 frames per second, I found VideoMaster, above, to be the clear winner in this respect above Sound and Vision too.



Sound and Vision can also grab in 16 colours with very little difference to VideoMaster



The main control panel for VideoMaster features both an easy-to-use frame select drag bar, and a full audio-editing suite.

shot of a talking person is an amazing sight to behold played on an Amiga. The software includes a vaguely MED-esque sequencing program, which will allow short snippets to be ordered and played back to make your own scratch video. Apparently it's been used on MTV, so it's certainly good enough.

HOLD STILL

Repeat then call it a day with black and white video, HiSoft have decided to take the VideoMaster one step further and offer full-screen grabs in colour as well as black and white.

As there is a perfectly good image grabber in the VideoMaster box, it's only a matter of software to get full-screen pictures.

A gadget in the software brings up a full-screen grab menu which offers mono and colour, low and hi-res grabbing, with or without interface.

Colour grabs can be achieved by placing the supplied coloured filters in front of the camera lens, but best results are achieved using the optional electronic RGB colour splitter. The auto button on the control screen uses the splitter automatically which makes the process simpler.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the VideoMaster software is extremely good. The card-based screens with big embossed buttons are excellent, and even the rather tricky video sequencing screen can be used quickly.

Sound editing and video special effects are thin on the ground, but as memory is rather critical it makes sense to keep second options out of the main program. There are plenty of other PD and commercial programs around which will do the job.

If I have a bone to pick, it's with the memory.

VIDEOMASTER
£79.95 (WITHOUT RGB SPLITTER)
£69.95 (FOR SPLITTER ALONE)
£119.95 (INCLUDING RGB SPLITTER)

A500 ☒ A500+ ☒ A800 ☒ A1200 ☒
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TELEPHONE: 0525 7181E1

EASE OF USE

Software is very easy to use, with only minor niggles. ★★★★★★★★★★★★

VALUE FOR MONEY

Not only do you get a full-screen grabber and a stereo sound sampler, but full motion video as well. ★★★★★★★★★★★★

EFFECTIVENESS

Moving video is amazing, but full grabs and sound aren't as good as the Pando XL. ★★★★★★★★★★★★

FLEXIBILITY

The current software only scratches the surface - just what you need to get proper HiSoft support. ★★★★★★★★★★★★

INNOVATION

An exciting new product - previously methods of grabbing real-time video were notoriously expensive. ★★★★★★★★★★★★

“ A budget priced piece of multimedia hardware that deserves great success. ”

Terrific fun.

OVERALL 90%

management. Although the software will inform you how many frames you can store, and how much memory is available for sound, it won't automatically balance them. This means it takes a lot of trial and error to maximise your system.

The other problem with the software is with file formats. Although sound samples and still images are stored in normal IFF format, moving video and film files aren't. This means you can't load a short video sequence into Deluxe Paint as an Anim. The programmers have promised IFF Anim support by the time you read this, and I for one am eagerly awaiting it.

There is a tremendous amount of scope in terms of multimedia applications as there are many Anim players available which can even play and spool files off hard discs at the same time. Some will even synchronise a sound sample when IFF files happen. VideoMaster will truly be the cheapest piece of real multimedia hardware around. At present, the stand-alone playback program is still enough to impress your friends.

SOUND AND VISION

At first glance the Romba Sound and Vision digitiser is a bit of a cop-out. Although they have managed to fit both a VID112 and a MegaMixMaster inside the same case, the software remains completely the same. You get two disks, two manuals – they are in effect, two completely different products.

The only real advantages are cost and convenience – there is no way of mixing both video and sound hardware simultaneously, as on the VideoMaster. Both pieces of hardware have been dealt with in past issues of CU AMIGA, but a quick review of the features here won't go amiss.

GRAPHICALLY SPEAKING

The graphics part of the Sound and Vision team are handled by a VID112 digitiser. This unit will grab individual single-colour frames from a video signal in 16 shades. As it includes an electronic colour splitter, this means it can grab a full colour 12-bit image very quickly indeed.



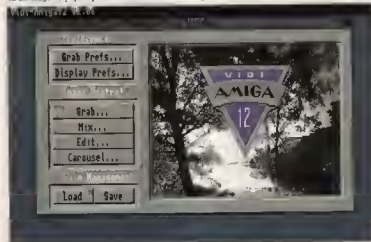
The diving software is very slick, and will quickly stuff as many pictures into memory as possible. Colour images can be created in just about any Amiga screen mode – including the new AGA modes – and saved to disk for later utilisation in art packages.

A host of image processing filters are included, but most are for creating novel special effects rather than any serious image manipulation. Although an entire frame can be grabbed, VID112 can't pass the data through the parallel port particularly quickly. This is a feature of the parallel port rather than a failing of VID1, although it does mean that live 25 frames a second sequences are out of the question. VID1 fails the juggle test, and is therefore best suited to stills or time-lapse sequences.

In terms of image quality, VID1 seems to have a slight edge. In bad light, the Romba digitiser gave superior results with considerably more stable edges and better colour. However, the example picture of some fruit taken in good sunlight with an identical camera should go some way to demonstrating that there isn't a great deal to choose between them.



These oranges, shot in daylight with a composite video camera, show both digitisers in full-screen HAM colour. Both contain about the same amount of detail, although the VID1 output top left has slightly better colour than the Sound and Vision output bottom right. (The printing process may exaggerate differences.)



VID1's main control panel allows grab and display resolutions to be set. Audio sampling is done from a different software package altogether.

way to demonstrating that there isn't a great deal to choose between them.

VERY SOUND

Also nestled in the compact little box is a MegaMixMaster stereo audio sampler. This is a standard 8-bit device with a 3.5mm stereo input jack. The software provided is one of the easiest to use sampling packages. It mightn't offer any stunning direct-to-disk effects or studio quality editing features, but it's crammed with more than 100 input level settings right, whilst the real time effects will provide 15 minutes of fun as you recreate great Karaoke moments of last year's Spanish holiday. Home keyboard fans will enjoy the MIDI support, which will allow the easy addition of sound effects into compositions.

As we've already covered MegaMixMaster in detail in past issues, there isn't really a lot more to say. The software is good, and the hardware certainly above average in terms of sound quality.

CONCLUSION

By squeezing the two digitisers into one box, Romba have hoped to provide the best of both worlds. Good graphics and good sound – put them together and what do you get? Well, at the

COMPARISON CHART

VIDEOMASTER S & V

Image quality	★★★★	★★★★
Sound quality	★★	★★★★
Features	★★★★	★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★	★★★★
Build quality	★★★★	★★★★

Primary Connection: PCMCIA Parallel

AGA support?	Y	Y
Serial & graphics		
simultaneously	Y	N
Overclock?	N	Y
Image processing?	N	Y
Special effects?	N	Y
S-VHS input?	N	Y
Starter record?	Y	Y
Sound resolution	8-bit	8-bit
Graphics resolution	12-bit	12-bit
Electronic Colour Splitter?	Option	Internal
Alfabet	N	N
TimeLapse (monochrome)	Y	Y
TimeLapse (colour)	N	N
Price	£79.95	£129.95
Colour splitter	£99.95	(included)
Warranty	£119.95	£129.95
Supplier	HISCO	Rombo

*Over-sampling gives over 8 dB boost

SOUND & VISION: £129.95

A900 A500+ A600 A1200
A1500 A2100 A3000 A4000

ROMBO LTD, BAIRD ROAD,
LIVINGSTON, SCOTLAND, EH54 7AZ
TELEPHONE: 0506 414631

CASE OF USE

Both software packages are well thought out, and look good. Internal AGA splitter is used automatically.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Splitter you'll find out the cost of each digitiser.

EFFECTIVENESS

Excellent results, both gain and sound are first class.

FLEXIBILITY

Software provides reasonable and accurate grab in INNOVATION.

There is nothing particularly clever about putting two channels in one box.

Two good, proven peripherals in one box. If you already have either a sound or video digitiser, get the individual parts instead.

OVERALL

80%

When grabbing still-screen images, Videomaster requires extra software. Although in this case the distinction is unimportant.

COLOUR

Digitising a monochrome video signal is quite simple: the timing information at the start of the frame is detected and then the rest of the signal is digitised with a fast Analogue to Digital converter. The values from the A/D chip correspond to the brightness level of individual pixels in the picture.

Grabbing colour is only slightly more difficult. As any good video buy now knows, every pixel in a colour image can be represented as long as you know the relevant quantities of Red, Green and Blue light. It follows that to digitise a colour image, you need to separate these colour components out and then digitise each individually. When the amount of Red, Green and Blue is known, the Amiga colour guns can do cal and like image re-played in colour.

As each colour needs to be separately digitised, the system requires these video frames with which to work. If these frames differ from one to the next, the result is a blur of colour. This means the image must remain completely static. Using coloured filters in front of a camera can prevent problems, as it can take several seconds to finish the grab. In fact, trying to grab a moving person or passing car is this way impossible.

With an automatic electronic colour splitter all three grabs are done in quick succession, which means it is just a few pixels possible to grab from very slowly moving scenes. If your video recorder has a period - and I mean digital by period - freeze frame, good colour stills of moving images can be grabbed. A V.C. digitiser such as VLA6 works slightly differently - it samples the video composite video waveform, which contains all the colour information as well as normal brightness and special timing or sync signals. Using software, it then calculates the colour components mathematically. It can take a good few seconds before the image is presented on screen. The advantage to this method is that it takes video frame samples in one go, and so there is no need to grab three different frames and risk movement and software paint colour errors.

moment good graphics and good sound.

If you want to combine the two you are really on your own, as there is no supplied software to do it. A lot of Amiga owners will already own a sound sampler, in which case the only real benefit is the reduction in the number of times the poor parallel port gets used.

OVERALL

Although the specifications for both Videomaster and Sound and Vision are similar, in use they couldn't be more different. Videomaster integrates moving video with sound perfectly, with good quality grabbing added almost as an afterthought.



The effects of movement can be catastrophic when grabbing a colour image over several frames. The Red, Green and Blue components each drift slightly from frame to frame causing multiple coloured images and possible image blur.

On the other hand, the Rombo unit is really two different peripherals sharing the same box, with no cross-over between them. As a result, it can manage still graphics and sound with slightly better fidelity. The ultimate decision of choice between Videomaster and Sound and Vision depends on the applications the potential buyer has in mind.

In terms of multimedia, the Videomaster is an extremely exciting product. Interestingly, the Videomaster provides support for an external sampler to handle sound and the MegaluxMaster made a big improvement when it was used instead. A case of two evils helping each other out? **20**

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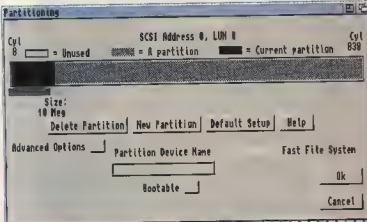
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Overdrive 35

Now, thanks to Overdrive 35, you can add a large hard drive to your A1200 or A600 and still leave your warranty intact. Mat Broomfield looks at this very promising product from France.

When we first previewed the Overdrive in the October issue of CU AMIGA, I was very enthusiastic about it and congratulated Software Demon on coming up with one of the most innovative 1200 products so far. Since making those comments based upon the pre-production models, a lot has changed, so we thought it was time to give you the full update.

IN THE BEGINNING

Overdrive 35 is an IDE hard drive which connects to your Amiga via its PCMCIA (smart card) slot. It's revolutionary as it's the only hard drive to connect to the Amiga in this way. The beauty about using this connection method, is that the drive can be

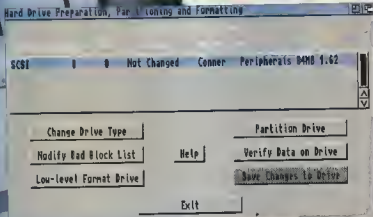
plugged and unplugged as often as you like without affecting your repair warranty, so if something else does go wrong, you won't have to worry about some snotty repairman telling you he can't fix your computer because you've fitted a drive and invalidated your warranty. Better still, not only does the Overdrive connect externally, it also runs between two and four times as fast as Commodore's recommended internal drives.

So what's the problem? Well, it seems that since I took a look at the early prototype drives (which worked perfectly but didn't autoboot) a number of problems have arisen in large scale manufacturing. The drives are constructed by Archos in France, and distributed by Software Demon over here. It seems that the first 1,000 drives to come off the assembly line were faulty. Unfortunately, each of the three review models I received at CU AMIGA were taken from this batch. The drives appear to work normally until you attempt to do a lot of reading and writing to them, or you accidentally interrupt the initialisation sequence. In either case the drive crashes, and may then crash intermittently for a few hours. As if that weren't bad enough, the actual data on the drive became corrupted if the crash occurred whilst data was being written to the drive.

As you can imagine, after several months of this, I'm not feeling as disposed towards the drive as I longed to. To make matters even worse, everyone I speak to says that they're not having any problems with their units.

Eventually, a few days ago I received another version of the drive, and this time it seemed to work perfectly. Software Demon tell me that

Overdrive comes with a much modified version of Commodore's HD-Install program which can be used to partition the drive and copy a selection of Workbench units to it for you.



they're desperately trying to locate and recall all faulty drives but they have no way of finding out whether or not a customer has a faulty unit unless the customer complains.

Anyway, back to the latest drive that I have received. Physically it doesn't look any different to any other hard drive. However, for the first time and a half, I've had Power Computing's Disk Expander continuously compressing and decompressing thousands of tiny files.

This is a particularly strenuous task to subject the drive to because it involves rapidly alternating between short duration read and write operations. So far, not a single crash, so I'm starting to gain some confidence in the unit now.

GET ON WITH IT

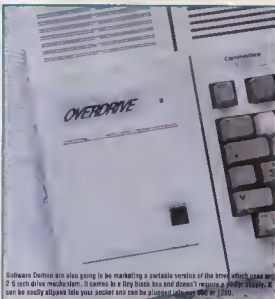
So anyway, what the drive confirms, it'll just tell you exactly what you'll get for your hard earned cash. Depending on the capacity you purchase you'll receive an 80-540MB drive.

This unit is a 428MB model made by Western Digital, but the exact mechanism depends on the size that you order, and the availability.

Software Demon told me there's a chronic shortage of small (less than 200MB) capacity drives at the moment, so if you want one of those you may have to wait. However, you can be sure that you'll receive a mechanism from a reputable manufacturer such as Western Digital, Seagate or Comcon.

The drive is housed in a white plastic case which matches the curves of your A1200. Incidentally the drive is a program disk that contains the special AQ Set Up software, as well as a number of related utilities.

The drive is pre-formatted and has a version of Workbench already installed on it. All you have to do is plug it into the side of your A1200 and turn the power on. The drive comes with its own



Software Demon are also going to be marketing a portable version of the drive, which uses a 2.5 inch drive mechanism. It comes in a tiny black box and doesn't require a power supply. It can be easily slipped into your pocket and can be plugged into an A500 or 1200.

809k per second that my (flashy) internal IDE drive does. And you'll get the picture: this is a seriously nippy drive!

Another good thing about the Overdrive is that it will quite happily co-exist with an internal drive if you have one. Because you can specify the boot priority you can assign the boot to any partition, or

simply leave your internal as the boot device.

However, the Overdrive is not so accommodating when it comes to expansion devices plugged into the internal trap-door slot. It can ergne quite terminally with some of them. I have a Siren TurboTech 4Mb expansion board, and the hard drive works just fine with it. When I plug in my A1230 II, the drive won't boot, and the whole computer just sits there hopelessly locked up.

Software Demon told me that the reason for this is that the peripheral manufacturers have mapped their device drives (especially those controlling RAM above 4Mb) into PCMCIA address space. This means that when a PCMCIA device is plugged in there's a device conflict and the whole caboodle falls on its face waving its life line in the air!

I can't confirm whether or not this is true, but if it is, it shows very lazy development on the part

of these other manufacturers. It's not true, then Aichos are the ones who are guilty of insufficient product testing, and they need a swift boot up their Gallic bottoms.

Anyway, the upshot of this, is that I have a 428MB hard drive and a 50MHz 1330 accelerator, but I can only use one of them at a time. Bummer!

CONCLUSION

Well, this has been a very difficult product to review. On the one hand it is a potentially superb piece of kit, but on the other hand it had a rather troublesome birth. However, to be fair, I can only review the finished product, and I shouldn't hold their development tribulations against them.

The unit I have here has read and written

gigabytes worth of data now without so much as a twitch. I did experience a device failure when I reset halfway through a boot, but then even a non-hard drive Amiga crashes under those circumstances.

The drive is very fast, and quite reasonably priced. However, I don't get the impression that it's particularly sturdy, and it would probably tell the ultra-stringent American FCC regulators.

Nevertheless, I'd had the choice between using the drive or my super-fast accelerator. I'd stick with the drive and that, my friends, should tell you something! **CU**

VARIABLE SPEEDS

One of the earlier problems with the Overdrive was caused by the fact that the PCMCIA slot and the drive's controller were not able to synchronise the rate at which data was read from, or written to, the drive. As I've already mentioned, the Overdrive itself is extremely fast. In fact, it's one of the fastest hard drives I've used, whilst well made, and just not up to the standards set by the manufacturer. This was one of the reasons for frequent crashes that occurred. Software Demon came up with an elegant solution which is to add a software speed-limiting in the AQ install program, so that you can adjust the drive to the speed of the mechanism. In theory, this should be factory set when you receive the drive, but it's also true that you will have the luxury to adjust it if you need it.

power supply, but also draws power from the PCMCIA slot.

The drive is pre-divided into two partitions, one of about 7-13Mb (depending on the drive capacity) and the other which occupies the balance of the space. The partitions have default device names of 'AQ0' and 'AQ1'. The manual recommends that you don't alter these partitions, a sentiment I heartily endorse as each time I altered them, the drive gave me nothing but trouble afterwards. Only trouble is, the boot partition can soon fill up, especially with a large capacity drive.

The drive is controlled by the Amiga disk device, a controller built into the card. This device identifies itself with a little 'AQ' icon, which, to my irritation, is ever present on the workbench screen.

VARY SPEED

As I've already mentioned, the installation software can be configured to work with normal, medium or fast drives. The setting that you use will determine the maximum data transfer rate. I used the slowest setting just to be absolutely safe, but even so, I managed to get a very respectable 1400k per second that's nearly 1.5Mb a second, and that's on a slow model. Compare that to the 800k a second that my GVP A330 Turbo used to do, or even the

JARGON BOX

CONTROLLER CARD The electronic interface that acts as an intermediary between the Amiga and the drive. Normally a controller is not needed for an IDE drive, but as this one is connecting to the PCMCIA slot instead of an IDE interface, it is needed.

HARD DRIVE: A special type of disk drive which contains high capacity, non-removable disks. These disks spin at great speeds and are far faster than floppy drives. Typical hard drives contain anything from 20-1000MB of data, that's the equivalent of approximately 20-1000 floppy disks!

IDE: Integrated Device Electronics. The term refers to a type of hard disk drive which contains its own built-in controller card.

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EFFECTIVENESS	★★★★★★★★★★
Very fast	
FLEXIBILITY	★★★★★★★★★★
It won't make your top of its, but then what do you want it to do?	
INNOVATION	★★★★★★★★★★
The only drive of its type for the Amiga 800 and 1200.	

Very nippy drive. Increases functionality of your Amiga.

OVERALL 88%

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- 7 DOME - volutions
- 8 MAGNUM - Future Phases, Alfred Station Volume 1 (1 + mix)
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TOP RATED

TV Paint 2

How can a graphics program which doesn't run on a standard Amiga be so good?

John Kennedy draws his own conclusions.

You might think that the Amiga is pretty well served with paint programs, what with *Deluxe Paint* and the new office favourite *Brilliance* appearing in every other issue. However, the plummeting cost of 24-bit cards suddenly means that yet another package is within the reach of a lot of new users.

TV Paint 2 is a paint program which won't run on the new AGA chipset. Nor will it run on the old chipset. In fact, the only chipset it will run on is an external 24-bit graphics card. That said, it will run on just about any system including AVideo, Domino, IV24, Harlequin, Refine, Sage and Picasso. It will also run on EGS systems, the recent 'standard' in graphics cards (and about the closest to re-targetable graphics we're going to get).

Installation is easy - just plug in the dongle (whoops, there goes multi-tasking, thanks very much all you software pirates) and follow the instructions. Then click the icon and a big *TV Paint 2* logo appears on the Amiga's screen.

Now, looking at the output of the video card (preferably on a second multisync monitor), you can see what all the fuss is about. In the middle of the screen is a small tool menu, which you'll grow to know and love.

FEATURES

At first glance there doesn't seem to be a large number of features. After all, *Brilliance* has hundreds of stacking sub-menus to wade through. Perhaps the reason for this is that *TV Paint 2* was designed for the artist, not necessarily the computer user. Also, there is no support for animation, none at all - not really surprising since each screen can consume several Mb of RAM.

The *TV Paint 2* drawing tools work like any other program. Although the display is composed of real-time 24-bit colour, updates are noticeably fast. On my A4000/330, *TV Paint 2* is faster than both *Deluxe Paint* and *Brilliance*. In 32-bit mode and it displays more colours. As for speed, the file handling is absolutely superb. Really the quickest I've ever seen on an Amiga. The special 24-bit DEEP format can save images to hard drive almost as quickly as to RAM, and even the integral JPEG support is handy. I tested it on an EGS card (the Speedrun) and the Harlequin 4000 card, and there was no noticeable difference in speed between the two. In fact, the 'heaper

Compositing scenes using different images is easy - simply select the section and paste it off, notice how the CU AMIGA text is curved and shaded around the sphere. It took about ten minutes to finish the entire image.



Left: This sort of abstract hogwash is pretty easy to produce. With 24-bit colour, palette clashes are a thing of the past.

JARGON BUSTERS

● **DEEP** A relatively new image format, which takes advantage of the way graphics cards store pictures in memory. Instead of using bitmaps like an Amiga display, a DEEP file contains the chunky colour information of the pixels for speedy loading and saving.

● **EGS** The "Enhanced Graphics System" is a standard which several different video boards aspire to. An EGS card offers a user-selectable resolution and any software with the correct GDS drivers will work on any EGS card.

● **AFSC** A marvellous system that crunches pictures in a tenth as much of their original size by carefully discarding information which hopefully might not be missed. Using 24-bits (three bytes – one each for red, green and blue) a graphics card can choose colours from a huge range of 19 million.

● **RAMB** The 282,000 colour mode offered by the new AGA chipsets found in the A4000, A1200 and C032.

● **VLAP** The excellent alien frame grabber from German company MacroSystems.

● **PICASSO** An Impressionist painter, born in the Virgin Islands the son of a Jewish-French stockbroker. Enrolled at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and Académie Suisse, he attended the prehistoric Salon in the 1850s and between 1870 and 1875 he organised two exhibitions in London. Eventually his style drifted from Impressionism to Pointillism.

EGS card held the advantage of displaying files on the paint screen.

Brush support is extensive, with box, lasso and polygon clipping and all sorts of weird mapping options. Once you have the brush in memory, it can be distorted beyond recognition and also be quickly shaded and re-coloured. In fact, the use of colour support is amazing, the ability to choose from over 16 million colours unleashes some anal power. Creating a light-bounded sphere takes only seconds to do and looks beautiful. You can even mix the perfect colour in a miniature artists' palette.

DARK SIDE

After using several Apple Macintosh programs, it has to be said there are a few areas where TV Paint 2 falls down. It would be nice to see a magic wand intelligent brush-cutter, and an easy way to copy one area of the image over another. Both are features which make dealing with scanned photographs a lot more fun.

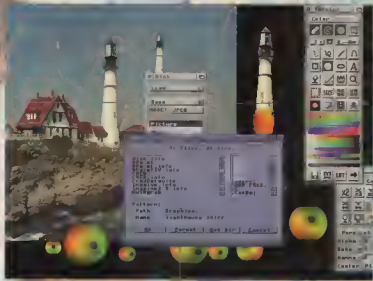
To give the big boys a anal run for their money, there also needs to be some image processing options. Convolutions are supported, but moping, noping and the like aren't.

In use, TV Paint 2 was remarkably stable. Generally when programs start to use 10Mb of

What's new with version 2.0

- More support for Touch Tablets, with the ability to use pressure sensitive pens and vibration.
- Chalk and coloured pencils have been added to the already 282,000 colour palette.
- Brush modifications are better: with stroking, enlarging, rotating and perspective control.
- A new transparency mode allows the picture to be seen through in the front screen. The impressionist more will make you an Instat Monet, Renoir, Sisley or Degas.
- A link to VLAP to automatically import pictures for processing.
- Affect support has been improved.

Picasso eat your heart out. This is a VLAP grab treated with the new impression feature. Art! Sculpture spend years doing this sort of thing, you know.



The huge displays offered by most graphics cards mean the image and the TV Paint 2 menus can co-exist peacefully. The border can be used for mixing colours or playing with balls.



Album owners, get your album current here. (Note I've discovered my vacation. The interesting aspect is that you're seeing it before I've scanned it.)

RAM at a time I expect to see the nasty yellow Recoverable Error on screen (which is usually what it is usually turns red and crashes). TV Paint 2 didn't do it to me once. In fact the only thing that went wrong was an occasional scatter of pixels under the cursor. These pixels weren't part of the real image as they weren't saved with the final picture, rather they seemed to be caused by the cursor computing what was underneath. It sounds awful, but in practice it wasn't a problem.

REQUIREMENTS

Although TV Paint 2 itself is relatively modest in the hardware you'll need to run it isn't. For a start you'll need a graphics card (although just one for about £300 or less these days), then you'll need a fast processor (68030 or 68040) and you'll also need a huge amount of RAM and hard disk space. I have 14Mb of RAM on the A4000 and can run it once or twice when using some really big images. If you can live without an UNDO buffer and lower resolutions you can get away with less. A big edit feature will allow a file that's much too big to be loaded and processed in sections.

CONCLUSION

I wish I'd never seen this package. I never be able to use Deluxe Paint any more. Balance we

are waiting I had TV Paint 2 and a graphics card instead. The ability to run and create true colour 24-bit images of incredible detail and clarity puts the Amiga on a par with dedicated Workstations. With a Broadcast quality board like the Harlequin and TV Paint 2's eight channel support, professional video work on the Amiga is now a reality.

TV Paint 2 is not really anything new. But it is fast, expressive and easy to use. It's the best I love it – I want to marry it. **CU**

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EFFECTIVENESS	★★★★★★★★96%
Excellent. Fast, wonderful pictures.	
FLEXIBILITY	★★★★★★★★87%
Not brimming with features, although Affix support is welcome. How can it work with some many boards and touch-tablets?	
INNOVATION	★★★★★★★★80%
Nothing very new here – most features accepted in Deluxe Paint a long time ago.	

A professional level graphics program – brilliant.

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SUPER SMOOTH ANIMATION

ADORAGE

2.0 AGA



There are several distinguishing criteria that differentiate between IFF animation and SSA animation. IFF animations are generated and played back as complete single images by means of so-called page flipping. The advantage of IFF animations is to be found in their compatibility. This means that, for example, IFF animations which have been generated in Adorage can be imported and played back in DPaint and then, for example, in Scala. This format presents serious disadvantages in all other respects, however. The quality of the animation leaves a lot to be desired when large quantities of data are involved. Apart from this, they require a lot of memory space.

The SSA animation format is new. Frames are calculated and played back in this format. SSA = Super Smooth Animation: super smooth playback quality is the most outstanding advantage of this format. Furthermore, data is compressed to a much greater extent, which is indicated by the modest memory requirement. These advantages ensure a considerably higher degree of flexibility in the realisation of animations.

Adorage is a multi-effect system, i.e. it includes an infinite number of options for the generation of video effects, as used in television. The main feature of Adorage is the generation of high-grade fade-ins, cross-fades and dissolves between computer graphics or images and, as if by magic, between computer graphics and a running video signal, which presupposes the use of a Genlock.

This means, for example, that a graphic image or text can scroll on a running video image and rotate about several axes before exploding out of the screen, whereupon the second scene commences, in which a logo is brought in undulating only to disappear again in a spiral nebula - just one example of the unbelievably wide range of options offered by Adorage. Order Code SW0101

System Requirements: Kickstart 1.2 and above with at least 1MB of memory

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SUPER SMOOTH ANIMATION SYSTEM FOR THE AMIGA

CLARISSA

3.0 PROFESSIONAL

Clarissa offers a means of converting Standard IFF or Anim5 animations into SSA format to which you have become accustomed with Adorage. And that is not all.

Clarissa offers a further 40% improvement (compared with Adorage) with respect to the smooth, natural playback of animations. This means that you can even improve the quality of an Adorage animation, so if an animation starts bucking in Adorage, simply import it into Clarissa for smooth, non-bucking playback. Apart from this you can combine graphic formats and palettes independent of the animation in this program, as a different palette can be used for each frame!!

Clarissa also offers a lot of useful cutting functions which allow you to inject the animations into videos and presentations. It goes without saying that you can also combine animations produced by different programs to produce a single one - all in all an incredible number of facilities for versatile animation.

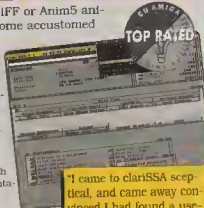
When the benefits of SSA were recognised, the wait for a program to convert normal Amiga animations began - and with the introduction of Clarissa, all can be revealed.

Clarissa is a fully-fledged animation editing system, which just happens to use the SSA system to display the finished work.

Whether existing Anim5 files, or a collection of individual frames, may be loaded and automatically converted to SSA.

Once in memory, the animation can be processed in all sorts of interesting ways, some of which would be simply impossible with Anim5. **Order Code SW0102**

System Requirements: A500 owners and above



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Most Amiga musicians' sonic arsenal will include their favourite score editor and some sampling hardware and/or software. This is because sampling is generally seen as the only way to get quality audio into and out of the Amiga. However, sampling relies on ready-made sounds being easily available, but unless you have a roomful of musical instruments at your disposal you have to rely on sounds from records or CDs. So what do you do if your favourite sound is well mixed back into an accompaniment by the Vienna Boys' Choir? Wouldn't it be nice if you could synthesise such amazing sounds directly onto your Amiga? Yes, well do you want an inexpensive program which could give you better sounds than even the best samplers? Yes. Read on then!

In 1990, the delightfully-named American software house, The Other Guys, launched a program which lay on this side of the pond knew about but which could be the answer to many Amiga musician's prayers. The program is called E-Z FM (pronounced ee zee - easy, gerd?) and it's a ridiculously powerful FM (FM stands for Frequency Modulation if you must know) synthesis program which transforms your Amiga into a top-class synthesiser.

E-Z FM allows you to create your own instruments to use with your favourite Amiga music program. The sounds are saved as one or three octave IFF-BSXW sound samples which can then be loaded into Sonic OctaMED, Deluxe Music or any music program which accepts IFF samples.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

The program is intuitive to use. The main screen contains most of the sliders and gadgets you need for setting up your sounds. The "single screen" concept gives the program a deceptively uncluttered feel which belies its power. You are given control over six Operators (FM-speak for oscillators) and you can change the frequency (pitch) and output level (volume) of each one independently with the sliders. Each operator lets you select one of six possible waveforms as your raw material (many "professional" FM synths only give you a simple sine wave). This surprisingly simple set of controls gives you an almost unlimited degree of tonal flexibility, depending on how

You can make sounds for GEM, or any other program with only one IFF sample.



Making music on the Amiga can be a lot of fun, but finding a decent sound source can be frustrating. Rob Baxter looks at an under-rated program to show us what we've been missing.

the operators are combined with each other.

ALGORITHM 'N' BLUES

In FM speak, a combination of interconnected operators is called an "algorithm", and these operators may be either sound sources (carriers) or sound modifiers (modulators). For example, you can have three modulators all controlling one carrier, or have a "stack" of several modulators, with each one controlling the next in sequence with the lowest one driving a carrier. E-Z FM offers you a choice of 32 preset algorithms which is enough to cover just about any practical combination.

The difference in pitch between a carrier and its modulator, or between two modulators in a stack is where the rich variety of tones available with FM come in. Some of the sound combinations can produce sound which are so complex they sound anything like music. However, with a bit of thought and some fiddling with all of the facilities available the only limit to the sound is your imagination.

OPEN THE ENVELOPE

Each operator has its own "envelope shaper". A sound's envelope is the "shape" which is represented by an x/y graph of loudness (y) as it progresses from silence to its loudest point, then fading back to silence again. You have full control over the envelope of each operator, so you can create highly realistic instrument simulations.

Setting each envelope is simply itself - just click on the envelope

E-Z FM's main screen showing the sliders which control pitch and output level for each operator.

HOW TO MAKE MUSIC ON YOUR AMIGA

If this article has whetted your appetite but you would still like to hear what it is all about before buying E-Z FM there are a number of PD music discs which I have produced (all are E-Z FM exclusively). Some of our AMIGA readers may already be familiar with my "Desktop Music Workshop" disks of classical music which have been around for some time (I'm glad, I have been using E-Z FM almost exclusively to make my instruments, so the disks I would recommend are Concerto A three disk set of Bach's Six Brandenburg Concertos, the vinyl majority of sounds for this were made with E-Z FM.

The Desktop Harpsichord Recital. The title says it all really, but all the harpsichords & sounds were made with E-Z FM. Classic Gold No. 7: Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor. Again, all the instruments were made with E-Z FM. The test disk made this of Chip RAM. All these disks can be obtained from United Public Domain Distributors, United Warehouse, Chisle House, Princes Street, Kelfield, Yorks YO21 4HB.

gadget (one for each operator) and a window opens in which you use the mouse to drag the "slopes" of the envelope curve into the desired shape. Click on "update" when you're satisfied and the dived is done. E-ZP-21.

FM synthesis, however, is a complex subject - as one gets deeper into the program you begin to find out which pitch relationships produces which type of sound. At first, you might have a particular sound in mind but no amount of fiddling and twiddling with the various controls will come up with quite what you want. There's often no substitute for trial and error but it quickly begins to make sense.

The odd bird-sounding session aside, E-Z FM is a breeze to use and the sounds are truly magical, they all possess that "crystalline" digital purity that we've come to expect from FM synthesis. The program will produce astonishingly rich and interesting sounds with a clarity that can be difficult to obtain from a sampler

DOIN' THE DO

When all your settings are complete, click the GO button and the computer does its work. E-Z FM is quick, a full 8K sound only takes about 35 seconds to generate (much quicker on an accelerated machine), shorter sounds are lot less, and while the sound is being generated you can actually see its waveform "grow" in a window at the bottom right of the screen. Full marks for that - a far better than staring at a "busy" sign and wondering when it's read.

JARGON BUSTERS

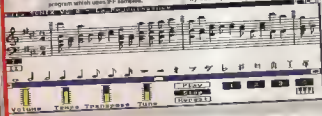
OSCILLATOR: This is where an electronic circuit designed to produce a repeating waveform of various frequencies - or in the case of E-Z FM, a part of a computer program which reproduces that function.

OPERATOR: Another name for an oscillator in FM jargon.

WAVEFORM: The electronic (or digital) representation of a sound.

SINE WAVE: The simplest of all waveforms. It sounds very pure, a bit like a flute.

IFF-BSXW: The most widely used Amiga sound format.



Once your sound is made, you can preview it using the Amiga keyboard just as if it was a synthesiser keyboard and this in itself is great fun.

Unless you've clicked the 'sustain' button though, when the sound stops as soon as you release the keys.

The program also includes a 'sound to buffer/merge from buffer' facility which is useful for constructing 'chords' for reproduction over a single channel, or for mixing two sample sounds into a more complex 'sound event'.

A feature which I like is the waveform animation window. When you have created a sound, click on the small waveform window and a big window opens showing your sound in high resolution.

You can zoom in on a small portion of the sound and just hear what that section sounds like in isolation.

Or you can animate it and see the sound wave dance around before your eyes, just like an oscilloscope.

own a suitable sample editor (if you don't already own an editor, try to get one with a reasonable crossfade facility as many E-Z FM sounds can be quite complex and difficult to loop smoothly otherwise).

CONCLUSION

E-Z FM is a remarkable program which deserves attention from Amiga users. It is easy enough for users to begin with to get satisfying results straight out of the box. But it is also powerful enough to keep the most experienced synth jockey very happy for a long time!

The manual is quite slim but along with the excellent example files included on the disk (check out the amazing piano settings), it's more than adequate to get you up and running on the basics in a very short time.

I would recommend E-Z FM as an essential 'must-buy' for anyone with even the most passing interest in sound and music. **CD**

WHAT IS FM SYNTHESIS?

Invented by Dr. John Chowning at Stanford University in the USA, in the sixties, FM (Frequency Modulation) was one of the early computer techniques developed for the digital synthesis of sound.

If an audio oscillator has its frequency (pitch) changed regularly up and down by the output of another oscillator, its frequency is said to be modulated. At slow rates, an example of this would sound like a grating vibrato.

However, if the frequency of the oscillator doing the modulation is at audio frequencies, instead of a vibrato, we hear the tone colour of the second oscillator. The faster the speed of the modulation, the more extreme the change in tone colour we hear from the oscillator (the carrier).

In other words, at audio frequency modulation, the shape of the output waveform at the carrier oscillator is changed, thus producing an audible change in the tone colour. There is a lot more to it than that, but that is the basic principle.

scope display. Not of much use really, but great fun to watch (just like the same!)

When you are happy with your new sound, you can save it to disk as an IFF \$BXV file. You can also save it in a number of other formats including 8 or 16-bit Audio IFF (useful for some of the 16-bit sampler cards you can buy). The program also allows you to save a small file containing just the actual E-Z FM settings which is very useful if you have to stop editing a sound before it's fully complete.

One major omission, as the fact that E-Z FM does not have its own built-in looping facility, so if you want to loop your sounds you'll need to load them into your favourite sample editor. I can't see the presenting too much of a problem though, as most Amiga musicians who are serious about their art will already

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VALUE FOR MONEY *****95%

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EFFECTIVENESS *****90%

Sounds are clear and the program is fast.

FLEXIBILITY *****75%

Let down slightly by the lack of a sample looping facility.

INNOVATION *****95%

There's not many like this out.

E-Z FM really makes your music stand out from the crowd.

OVERALL

91%

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DiskExpander is an innovative program for all Amiga users. With this software solution you may double the capacity of your floppy disk or hard disk drives. The installation process takes only a few seconds and afterwards DiskExpander works invisible in the background. The compression ratios vary from 30% to 70%.

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expander features

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Oh, my tracing pen got stuck there - but the glass and reflectance are best. I like the cup. It looks so realistic. I hope my own is as good.



Designer Objects Volume 1

If you love 3D but find designing objects a chore, why not follow John Kennedy into a virtual cafe for a chat?

When you need to telephone home, try over to the corner. I love the little top.

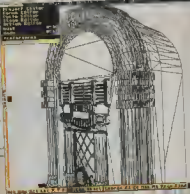
Creating objects for use in 3D rendering programs isn't easy - most of my attempts at creating spaceships and helicopters with Imagine and up looking like strange space-bus. I don't know where I want in a PD library somewhere. Usually give up and use Real 3D instead. As I find it is too easy to work with.

That isn't to say that Imagine doesn't have a lot going for it. It is very good at rendering complicated objects, and it's also very good at making animations. Even better Imagine is also about to be given a

serious revamp so it's about time I sat down and learnt to use it properly. However, just as I'm about to do so along comes a pack of pre-defined objects for Imagine - Designer Objects volume 1. This is a three-disk set containing all the parts you need to re-create a 1950's American Diner, complete with counter, stools, jukebox, pay phone, plates, glasses,



Er, you can see that, Designer Objects may make designing my next phone a little easier. But those would not be my own designs.



It's only when you see the wireframe representation in the editor that you can begin to really appreciate the work involved in creating the objects.

menus - heck, there is even a toilet in the corner. Everything you see in the accompanying pictures came from the set and there are still plenty more bits and pieces left to use.

The objects are designed so that loading them into the Imagine image editor will automatically position them correctly for the scene, which means you only have to make a few quick adjustments to camera angles and lights before you can start rendering. Rendering is remarkably quick for objects which appear very detailed, and using them to make an animation in a real possibility. On an A4000/330 with a FPU (Floating Point Unit), I found I was creating 24-bit hi-res scanline images at about 11



The Jukebox is the highlight of the set. It's an authentic Warburton 1015 and it looks fabulous.

imitates Ray tracing, however, reveals the true quality of the objects, but takes much longer. Come on Software Demon get that 50MHz 68030 upgrade out before it's of old age!

Memory is the only problem, because you are going to need lots. Although supplied in both low end high resolution forms, a scene featuring all the objects can take from 5Mb to 14Mb of RAM to render. You'll be able to get by on an A1200 with some extra RAM if you try not to get carried away. These scenes were created on a 14Mb A4000, but most left about 9Mb to spare.

DETAIL

The objects themselves are excellent, perfectly proportioned and make great use of existing Amiga textures. Although there is a limit to what you can do with the inside of an 1950s Diner, the objects will find homes in many other scenes. The techniques used to build them will keep imaginers busy for hours as they try to recreate them. Highly recommended.

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EASE OF USE **85%**
Simply load into Imagine and render. Good instructions help the beginner.

VALUE FOR MONEY **90%**
Exchange rate and import duty permitting, these objects are a bargain.

EFFECTIVENESS **92%**
Scenes rendered in 24-bit colour look staggering, there is no other way to describe it.

FLEXIBILITY **75%**
Okay, so when you want to leave the diner you have problems, but some objects will still be very useful in other work.

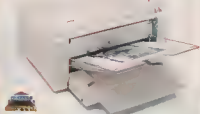
INNOVATION **60%**
Terra Dimensions Clipart is great! Look out for more in the series.

Imagine owners everywhere will appreciate the work that has gone into this set and demand more of the same.

OVERALL

85%

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PD SCENE

If you really want to see what your Amiga is capable of then take a look at what the PD libraries have to offer. Jason Holborn is your helpful librarian.

THE FINAL FRONTIER

Disk Magazine



Moved in with a healthy rostering of articles are high quality Star Trek-related images such as this.

Calling all Trekkers – or 'trekkers' as they like to be referred to these days (so I have been reliably informed). *The Final Frontier* is a five disk adventure game, absolutely packed with everything you ever wanted to know about Star Trek but were just too interested to care. If you've ever lost sleep because you just had to know what Jean-Luc Picard's first-door was like, or the colour of his curtains – then this is the magazine for you.

Every issue of *Star Trek* (all 'conventions' and movies) – even *Deep Space Nine* is covered. There are also pages of disk magazines – including book and video reviews, science fiction merchandise details, *Star Trek* convention reports, Phenomenon as much as the next man but with a bit of science fiction. It appears that they extend further than their own frontiers that is something that all needs an 'undiscovered country' to them – Trekkers commonly refer to it as 'real'.

Credit where credit is due however, this magazine is professionally put together with well-written articles, great pictures and some pop music too, amongst others. After Brimble (Team 17's musical genius), if *Enterprise* exploits are your thing then you will not be disappointed.

Available from:
Seventeen Bit Software,
1st Floor Offices, 218
Market Street, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire, WF1
1DH. Tel: 01924 66982. **78%**

The Final Frontier disk magazine looks great. Here is disk magazine that goes further.

ARCHIPELAGOS CAMPAIGN

World domination is the name of the game (again). In this simple but surprisingly addictive strategy offering in which up to six players (human or otherwise) slog it out in an attempt to wipe out opposing armies and conquer lands anew.

The gameplay is certainly simple enough however, so even those that don't normally enjoy strategy games should find this easy enough to get into. A map of an imaginary world is laid before you and you're then allotted your own share of the islands that make up that world. Each of these regions has a number in it which defines the strength of each individual army on that island. And each island is displayed in the colours of the armed camp that controls it. In order to gain



Who needs peaceful co-existence when it's so much fun conquering lands? Essex Computer Systems' brilliant *Archipelagos Campaign*!

supremacy you must soldier forward and attack neighbouring lands, matching your forces against theirs. If your attempt proves successful you're then the proud owner of another chunk of territory. When the area at battle have subsided, you can then proceed to move your remaining troops around your empire to strengthen those areas of the map that are most under threat from enemy invasion. Gaining land can also strengthen your armies as the more countries you occupy, the more new recruits you are rewarded at the end of your turn. Once you start to lose land, however, it's a bit of a slippery slope trying to get back on top of the game.

Archipelagos Campaign may not be the most original game by any stretch of the imagination but it's an enjoyable romp nonetheless. Available from: Essex Computer Systems, 116 Middle Cockerford, Baddendene, Essex SS16 4JA. **90%**

9 FINGERS

Demo

Remember Spaceballs' brilliant *State of the Art* demo? Well this is their follow up, and it's even better than the original!

It's a two-disk set, but fortunately you only need one drive to run it. What you get is a stream of stylised video animations, consisting mostly of virtuosic dancers going lopy to a decent techno backing track. The coders have done a sterling job of vastly improving the graphics over the originals, proving that they're still the best demo crew on the scene by a long shot. Oh, the soundtrack's got a lot more beef in it too. A bit special and no mistake. Available from: Graphic F/X, PO Box 88, Manchester M21 2BN.

Disk Nos. MU164A, MU184B.

91%

ERIKA AGA

Slideshow (A1200 only)

Hands up those of you that actually follow the exploits of that masterpiece of American television *Baywatch*. Right, hands up who pencils a regular date into their FiloFax just to sit down in front of the box to oggle at their goddess of the Californian sands, Erika Eleniak. Just as I thought! Well, I've got some good news for you - she of the slinky swimwear has made her way to the Amiga thanks to a fatbed scanner and a copy of ADPro.

This single disk slide show contains some glorious AGA pictures of the blonde beauty herself in the sort of poses that would certainly give David Hasselhoff something to think about.

Due to the sheer size of each picture, there are only ten images to look at. But quantity seems to have taken a welcome back seat to quality. For all Erika Eleniak fans over the age of 19 (two of the pictures are definitely adult material), Erika AGA will give you a new insight into the lady behind the swimsuit.

Available from: 17 BN Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/3 Market Street, Wexham, West Yorkshire WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982. Disk No. 2896.

65%

GRAPEVINE #18

Disk magazine

Are you ready for another encounter with the guys from LSD? You'd better be because here is issue 18 of *GrapeVine*, the demo coder's and hacker's disk magazine. Packed full with over 321 articles containing gossip and hardline tips on how LSD think you should live your life - and believe me these guys don't miss their words. Subjects such as the 10 worst chat up lines and 10 things you can do with a dead floppy disk are both covered in this three disk set.

To be perfectly honest, a great deal of the humour is definitely from and to those who are easily offended should seem well clear. For the rest of us, however, *GrapeVine* Issue 18 is guaranteed to raise a smile or two. Available from: Comedy PD Compiler Software, 78 Bockingham Green, Basildon, Essex SS13 1PF. Tel: 0268 559164. Disk Nos. D078A, D078B, D078C.

77%

CHANNEL Z ART AND ANIM SPECIAL

Disk magazine/demos (A1200 only)

This is Channel Z's first offering for the new year and it contains a healthy selection of pictures, animations, utilities and features for A1200 and A4000 users. Definitely worth a mention in an excellent Eric Schwartz animation and there is also a special feature all about Eric.

Also worth a mention is an impressive selection of a very tasteful (but unfortunately none) Marilyn Monroe head, which smoothly rotates back and forth. Backing up these visual treats are some useful graphical tips and utilities, soothing music and a good selection of interesting articles.

The only real problem with the *Channel Z* magazine is the almost total lack of A1200-specific material - surely an A1200 disk magazine should include A1200 information?

Available from: CZWN, 3 Edleston Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 3HN. Disk Nos. Channel Z Issue 3.

43%



What is the answer to the question? Find out in the pages of this magazine.

KNIGHT FIGHT

Game (A1200 only)

In days of old,
When knights were bold,
And computers were not invented,
Warriors in white,
Came to fight,
And walked away contented. (Ahem.)

Oh well, poetry was never my strong point, but beating the living daylight out of pixelated warriors is something that does appeal to me. In this AMOS game you can choose to be one of four ancient warriors - either a knight, a wizard, an elf or a dwarf - each of which, in true *StreetFighter* style, has his own special moves.

But *Knight Fight* does offer a few pleasant surprises which save it from being lost amongst the plethora of fighting games that seem to be filling the PD libraries these days. Most interesting of all you can place bets on the fight which can result in funds for the purchase of "power-ups" if you win.

Unfortunately *Knight Fight* does not manage to succeed in the playability stakes. The controls are just too basic. Grips aside though, *Knight Fight* may be worth investigating.

Available from: Essex Computer Systems, 116 Middle Crockerford, Basildon, Essex SS16 4JA.

68%



StreetFighter it may not be, but Knight Fight's strategy element does make it a different experience.

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PD UTILITIES

Public domain software doesn't just mean games and demos - look hard enough and there's a wealth of productivity software in there too. Jason

Holborn does the sorting...

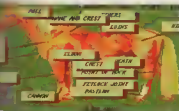
SMALL BUSINESS PACK Applications

Need a spreadsheet? How about a database and a word processor? Well you can put away your cheque book because GVB's new *Small Business Pack* provides everything that the more serious Amiga owner could ever want in their software collection. Consisting of a total of six disks, the *Small Business Pack* contains a selection of the very best in public domain applications old and new. Some of these programs are, as it were, rather strange choices for such a pack, but on the whole this is a very good pack indeed. Highly recommended. Available from: GVB-PD, 43 Badger Close, Meldehead, Berkshire SL62TE. Tel. 0831 649385. Disk No. U294.

30%



Who needs to spend £100 on a dedicated word processor when you can get one like this on GVB's *Small Business Pack*?



Your First Pony is a first-rate educational title that teaches you everything you'll ever want to know about horses.

YOUR FIRST PONY Educational

Do you know the difference between a 'Running Martingale' and a 'Standing Martingale'? Do you even know what they are? If not, then Your First Pony should be at the top of your PD shopping list. Put together entirely using Gold Disk's

HyperBook Your First Pony is an interactive information system that contains everything you need to know to help keep your horse or pony happy. Subjects covered include horse and pony health, tack, grooming and clipping, shoes and a very detailed breakdown of horse face and leg markings. All this information is displayed in a very graphical format complete with a healthy selection of digitised pictures. In all, a must for all horse mad Amiga owners.

Available from: NBS PD, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, I.W. PO30 5QA. Tel: 0983 529 594. Disk No. CLE34 (2 disks).

88%

USEFUL UTILITIES 3 Utilities

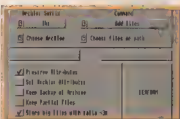
Useful Utilities 3 is a disk containing some of the most useful public domain utilities available. Although the disk contains only six different programs, all are of very high quality indeed, both in terms of their features and presentation. Of particular interest is *FHSpread*, a relatively unknown spreadsheet program that is definitely a cut above the rest. Although not quite in the same league as most commercial spreadsheets,

FHSpread is packed to the gills with spreadsheet functions - making it ideal for the businessman on a (very) tight budget.

Also on the disk is *LogicShop*, an interesting circuit design program and *S-Pic*, a small utility that converts IFF images into executable files that can be viewed without the need for a separate picture viewer. *WordWorkbench* is also in for a treat too with *DiskSalv* 2 (a brilliant disk recovery program), *DiskMate* (one of the best PD disk copiers) and *Artix* (definitely the best PD system monitor available). In all, a very good line up that any Amiga owner should find useful.

Available from: Heaven Computing, 15b Mesching Road, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 9RL. Disk No. UT081.

82%



USEFUL UTILITIES 4 Utilities

Heaven Computing do it again in this latest offering containing even more useful public domain utilities. Once again, the quality is very high indeed with the programs covering such diverse subjects as animation, data compression and even money management. *Cerms* fanboys should find all it very useful as it provides a quick and easy method of adding an multi-style interface to any of the many *Shal*-based archiving utilities. The program fully supports LHA, Arc and Zoo formats with all the options that they provide. *Main Actor* is interesting too - it's a fully fledged animation editor that supports a number of well known animation formats. With it you can load and save animations, add frames within an animation and even alter the timing of frames. In all, another great PD disk.

Available from: Heaven Computing, 15b Mesching Road, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 9RL. Disk No. UT082.

82%



SPITFIRE! Educational

Find out everything you ever wanted to know about the aircraft that smashed the Luftwaffe in RAF's brilliant Spitfire!

Bend it all out of control! Yes it's time to take a nostalgic look at the aircraft that is generally credited as the warplane that beat the boss over the skies of England. *NBS Spitfire!* is another *HyperBook*-generated information database that has been designed by the same skillful hands that brought us *Your First Pony*. Chock a block with interesting facts about the *Spitfire* development, its many revisions and even its armament and cockpit, all of which is backed up by lots of pictures and diagrams. This disk is a must for all *Spitfire* fans.

Available from: NBS PD, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, I.W. PO30 5QA. Tel: 0983 529 594. Disk No. CLE32 (2 disks).

88%

ART GALLERY

Think you can better this month's selection of readers' art? Then send any contributions to the usual address. For now, feast your eyes on this collection.

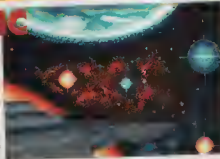
MAGIC CARPET

By Steven Browne



EPIC

Alan Reid
or The
Master from
Essex



HEAT WAVE

Werner Marsh of Manchester created this warrior using the program Deluxe Paint 4 AGA



1 First he did
half of the
picture in out-
line, using
lighter colors
for the muscle
and darker
colours to fill
in areas around the
muscle

2 The back-
ground was
created next
using a spraycan
brush to make
the final
image

3 Next, the
warrior's fol-
lowers were
drawn in



4 Finally the warriors are shown brandishing all their weapons in the air

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So why upgrade your memory? Probably because a memory upgrade is the most versatile enhancement you can make to your Amiga. Apart from the fact that you need it to run the more powerful Amiga software there are many extra benefits too. You can use some of it as a RAM disk, just like a super-fast extra floppy drive. This means you can avoid the cost of a second floppy drive or hard disk. Some software that claims to need a hard disk will run on your Amiga from a RAM disk. A print spooler can save you time waiting for your printer to finish printing before you get on with your work, use your new RAM instead of upgrading your printer or buying an expensive buffer.

For reasons best known to themselves, Commodore forgot a real-time clock for the A1900. Well, we've put it back with our new UK made A1900 clock for just £19.99. Getting more from your Amiga means at least 1Mb, getting the best means adding as much RAM as you can is the essential Amiga upgrade!

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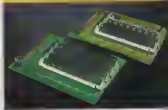
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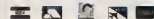
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Let me say that I am not sure that you can

AMIGA

Workshop

ISSUE 15 MARCH

As anyone who has ever used an Amiga will tell you, you can use it for a lot more than just playing the odd game. Amiga Workshop is here to show you exactly how your Amiga can be utilised to do everything from create games and works of art through to linking up with the outside world. Through the next 32 pages, you'll be taken through tutorials in **ARexx**, **Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit** and **Blitz Basic**, along with our usual Question And Answers session and your opinions aired in **Backchat**. What are you waiting for? Turn the page!

172 CALIGARI COMPETITION

It's one of the most 3D rendering packs available to you, and it would be yours if you could create a scene, no shops and no more one up. An article giving you a decent knowledge of 3D Amiga and Caligari 34 and a copy could be yours.

Yet another hot bed of opinions, views and violent disagreements. Backchat is the place to be these days if you're a youth with a conscience and you want to change the world. Alternatively, you could just tell us if you think PCs are better than Amigast.

178 POINTS OF VIEW
Is the future of the CD32 as bright as it has to wear shades, or is it looking for an easy retirement and a lucrative armchair? Mal Brownfield voices his opinion.



If last month's AGA tutorial got you off to a flying start, this month's four-page extravaganza will have you foaming at the mouth! Single colour cycling, metallic glints and all manner of practical tips await you!



John Kennedy takes you for a walk through the past with this month's coverdisk tutorial. You've all learned how to do scrolling shoot 'em ups, but what about something a little more tricky - Asteroids, for example!



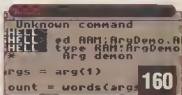
What's the difference between a Blitz Ship and an AMOS Sprite? Find out this month as Jason Holborn delivers a little deeper into the world of Blitz, and reassures in time to show you that hardware sprites needn't be as hard as their name suggests.



Video titling needn't be the domain of the expensive titling packages. Jason Holborn shows you how, with nothing more than a copy of Deluxe Paint IV you too can create a vast array of highly professional and impressive video effects.



We all know what FidoNet is, now all you need to learn is how to get started with it. John Armitage explains the ins and outs of setting up a mailbox (without the need of a postman and a letterbox) in his own, inimitable way.



Oh, what do you think you're looking at? You starting something, or what? Okay, so that might not be what Dave Smithson means when he says he'll show you how to have an argument with ARexx - at least we don't think so. But read on to find out.

Regulars

166 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

You'd be surprised just how many ways there are to get stuck in the Amiga world. Honestly, it's worse than playing Twister in the dark when your back's gone! Thank goodness. Mal and John are on hand to help out.

174 BACKCHAT



What's that? You want to try your hand at desktop publishing, but don't feel you have the equipment to do the job? Jason Holborn is at hand to show you just how you can create your own publishing empire using the smallest amount of equipment. Maybe you'll be the next Rupert Murdoch?

Pete Lee's

DPaint AGA TUTORIAL

PART

2

The beauty of DPaint AGA has a lot to do with its use of colours. Taking full advantage of the A1200's beefed-up graphics and display modes, it makes the 32 colour set-up of the standard, non-AGA type program look really sad.

It is not just the range of 256 colours in low resolution mode which is exciting, but the sheer joy of not having to scribble, save and load each colour individually. In fact, you can actually waste colours in AGA mode and it won't matter.

Last month we looked at ranges which had a default palette of over 250 colours. This month, we check out colour cycling, which also has a default palette of over 250 colours. So, you have to do very little to create multi-coloured wide-ranging single-frame animations.

Just browsing through the colour palette will show the wide assortment of ranges built into the program - there are so many colours to choose from including golds, blues, greens, reds, yellows, oranges, pinks and so on, in fact probably almost every colour under the sun is in there.

We'll be using those to their best advantage. But it won't be that easy. There are a couple of things to learn before you can tuck in and start tackling the hands-on tutorials, and the first is

SINGLE COLOUR CYCLING

No, it's not a mistake. DPaint IV AGA can cycle one colour to another without affecting anything else in the palette. And using the feature allows you to pulse colours to give a stroboscopic effect, or make objects disappear if you change them to the background colour. Here's how to do it: the ranges requester should be familiar after last month's tutorial, but you may have missed something as you added colour beads from the palette to the placement bar above. Each colour you position there has a dot underneath it - this shows that it is a colour from the current palette.

To get a single colour to cycle, we have to use some other colours not in the palette. To do this, just put two different colours at opposite ends of the placement line, and click on "show". The intermediate colours will be displayed in the display window. This is the Amiga's palette you're saving, not yours.

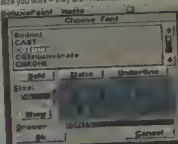
To select one of the shown colours, press the comma key on the keyboard, and your cursor will change into the pipette sampler. Click near the end of the second colour on the shown display to choose that colour. Now move your cursor (which has changed into a colour bead) anywhere you like on the placement line. The colour will be positioned, but won't have a dot underneath it. The shown range will incorporate this colour, though. You can remove the second of the original colours now (click on it and drag it off the placement line and let go of the mouse button), and the range which is displayed in

Owners of Amiga 1200s are in for another treat this month - swarming ants, flaming comets and blazing effects - as Peter Lee shows you how to squeeze the most from DPaint's enhanced AGA version.

the show window is the range of colours which will cycle when your first colour is used on screen. So you can see, it is using one palette colour, and an "imaginary" one which isn't available to draw with. Set the rate slider to suit your needs - a low rate gives a very slow transition, while a higher rate strobes the colour. You can use this technique several times so that, for instance, a dark colour suddenly flashes from blue to yellow before disappearing into darkness again. Do this by placing non-dotted colours in the appropriate location along the placement bar as before. Remember though, that this single-colour Range takes up one of only eight available ranges at your disposal.

TEXT

As in DPaint IV, you have automatic access to new Amiga font technology. In the past, fonts were stored as bitmaps in standard sizes. But now with a new Workbench setup you can use outline fonts. These have the advantage of being displayed in any size you want - they aren't restricted to the normal



Now with a new Workbench setup, you can use outline fonts. These fonts are ODF (Outline Display Font) and can be used in any size.



This colour has been artificially placed on the placement bar. Note - no dot.



This colour is from the palette. Note the dot under the colour bead.



As shown in AGA's speed test, this feature allows anything.

8, 24 or 36pt definitions which you find on almost all bitmap type styles. However, the downside is that this kind of flexibility leads to larger amounts of storage and memory usage.

There are three standard Amiga outline fonts: CG Times, CG Times and Letter Gothic (the CG prefix stands for Compugraphic, the company which developed this system). The way to control their size is simply to highlight one of the typelaces in DPaint's Text window, click in the size box, and type in the new figure. You decide how big the font will be, which is a major change from the restrictions of bitmap fonts.

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

Before you move onto the main tutorial, you may want to refresh yourself with this example on the main points of colour cycling - illustrated in figures

ANT antics...

Figure 1: Initially you have to alter the palette to achieve the movement effect



1 and 2 overlaid. We're going to paint a swarm of ants on screen, which continuously moves along a given path. Firstly, you'll notice I've made the background purple. You can use any colour you like, but it'll be important later that you make a note of exactly which colour it is. To do this, check its colour number in the Palena requester.

The heart of the animation is a range of colours which are all turned to the background colour — except one. So as this one colour cycles along the line of pixels, you get an impression of movement. To achieve this effect, we have to alter the palette. Call up the palette requester (p. or right click in the current colour selection window). I've used a sequence of 11 adjacent colours, turning 10 into the purple of the background, leaving the last one blank for the ant colour.

To copy a colour (in this case our purple, number 170) click on it in the palette requester and click on the copy button, and place the cursor in the slot into which you want to duplicate the colour. If your colour is in a different palette number from the destination, don't worry — just click on the up/down arrows of the requester to move to the correct location. Do the same on the other 10 colours, and copy colour 0 (black) into the first position. Click on OK. (If you chosen colour is a few palettes away, remember that once you've copied it into a new slot, you can use that slot as the basis for the rest of the copies, without having to go off to other palette numbers to duplicate it.)

Call up the Ranges requester from the colour pull down menu (keyboard shortcut Ctrl+1). One by one, position the 11 adjacent colours 10 (purple, one black) next to each other on the placement line, starting from the left as in the illustration.

Set the Rate to the highest level, to give the ant the criteria lots of rapid movement when animated, and click on OK. You can see from the screenshots that I added some text, but this is immaterial to the project; you can simply draw the ants on a blank screen, cleared to the original colour you used as the background, and which is copied into the 10 colour slots in the palette. It's important to use the original colour as your background, and not one of the copied colours used in the range. If you don't, the whole image will

strobe and do you an injury! Select the little cross brush (the next to smallest one), and Freehand drawing mode. Now press key F7 to turn on cycle draw and ensure your foreground colour is one of the 11 we've just defined. As you draw your trail, you'll only see the black dot as it's painted, but don't worry readers — the 10 background colours are also painting.

You can draw with screen cycling turned on to give you a better idea of what's happening (Tab



Figure 2: Eventually you end up with an animated string of insects.

key). Draw out the lines of ants, and go over them again to make the swarm more plentiful.

You should have a nicely animated string of little insects once cycling is activated. I've included another screenshot to show the actual colours we used before converting them. You can easily see that as you cycle paint, all the colours in the range are used one after the other. The fact that 50% are 'invisible' until cycled is all part of the DPaint AGA magic.

NEXT MONTH

We'll be moving onto animation using all those lovely AGA colours, and having more fun with morphing. Until then, keep those pixels pulsing.

BOLD 'N' BRASSY THE GLINT FACTORS

Shimmering metallic effects (in water-based digital for that matter) are just a combination of range, fill and cycling. Here's a quick guide to making this brassy but elegant specific details of accessing DPaint's features are given in the other tutorials.

big'n bold



● Call up the fill requester, and with the gold range active, select Line fill.

big'n bold



● When you activate

Cycle now, the letters will shimmer very nicely.

● I added a background for extra interest; Extra lettering was created in the spare screen, and placed 'behind' the golden letters by creating a stencil (last month's tutorial).

big'n bold

● Similarly the streaks of light and



dark were created with the stencil as with transparency set to 40% and the Polygon tool used with a darkish grey colour.



39

HANDS-ON TUTORIAL

TUTORIAL TWO

Red and yellow and pink and green, orange and purple and blue – just a few of the brilliant range of colours that you can achieve when you use DPaint AGA. In the second part of his tutorial Peter Lee boldly goes where no artist has gone before.



STEP 2

Create the starfield like this. Select the airbrush drawing tool, one of the blues in our newly created range, and the single pixel brush. Press key F7 to turn on cycle draw, and paint the stars on screen in clouds. If you like, turn on colour cycling as you draw (press the Tab key) to get an idea of what the image is going to look like. You can make the stars as dense or thin as you like. Now we want to draw the comet's head using a cute DPaint trick. Select the line tool now and with a finger on the ctrl key, draw out a pattern of radial lines, which will centre on your starting point. As long as you hold down the ctrl key, you can radiate lines like this. If you have cycling turned on, you will see how great the strobes of coloured lights look as they pulse down the lines.

STEP 3

You need another range defined now, for the purple planet. Again, call up the range requester, and be sure to move the range number slider along one to position Two, otherwise you'll over-write definition One, which is for the stars. Now place the colours numbered 162-174 next to each other in the placement bar. You can click on Show if you like, to see how the colours merge together. Click on OK. Open up the Fill requester, and click

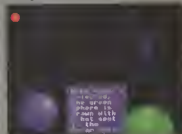


on HI, for a highlight fill. Make sure range Two is the active fill range.

From the illustration you can see how the position of the Fill highlight crosshair determines where DPaint will place the first colour in the range. For the purple planet, you can place it top right, but for the green planet you might try to create a polar cap by placing the highlight just below the top centre of the circle.

STEP 4

The green planet needs to have another range defined for it, so call up the requester, and move the range number on to Three. The colours to use



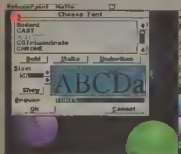
across the placement bar are 90 to 109 with a zero rate selected. Click on OK, and open up the fill requester, changing the range number to Three. Now draw the planet as before, with its highlight in the polar region. The planets and stars are now in place, and so are their graphic 'hot' spots.

STEP 5

Time to add some text now. Call up the fonts requester (right click in the Text tool) and select

Using Range 2 to create a highlighted filled sphere. Note how the 'hot' spot adds depth

CGTimes. This is a special computer-specific font which can be made any size you want. Unlike the Amiga's fixed fonts, which need a distinct size, some of the AI 2005 typefaces are computed from data and can be re-sized at will. You'll notice I've set this font's size to 56, which is beefy enough for our needs. You may want to add your



own text, so the size you type in will be based on how many words you want. We need to be careful, now, in selecting a colour for the text. If we pick one which has already been used in the image we could hit a snag, because they've all been included in a Range. Some ranges will cycle, and others won't (the ones with 0 as their rate). In a cunning move we're going to make the text pulse, from invisible black to its current blue colour - and only use one colour to do it! It amazes me too, but it works. Here's how.

STEP 6

You might just make out that of the four colours in the placement bar, only one has a dot underneath it. This is the only true palette colour; the others have been picked up and placed there by another means. So what will happen when cycling is turned on is that the text colour (the one with the dot under it) will strobe from black to blue, then flash white before fading again to black. And as I said, this uses just one palette colour. Check out the main article for a more detailed summary of how to use this feature.



STEP 7

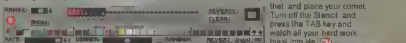
Now for hot spots of a different kind. As part of the main image, combining as it does lots of uses for colour cycling, we've built a cosy fire to use



with a little bit of text. And, yes, you've guessed it - we need a range! This time it's a little different in that you'll be using several different colours, because we don't need smooth transitions this time. Call up the Range requester and make this range Five. As you can see, this is a mixture of 14 colours, alternating yellows, reds, oranges and blacks. The black incidentally is to add a realistic flicker as a flame bursts into life then disappears. Set the rate to 44, and click on OK. Now, with cycle selected from the modes menu (or key F7), and a medium sized brush, draw the flames on the spare screen using one of the colours you've just placed in the range. Turn on cycling to see the effect as you paint until you get a pleasing effect. You may also want to smear the topmost flames to give a more realistic look. Once you've done this, you can add the flames to your text, as seen in the final stage of the illustration.

STEP 8

The final touch to the illustration is the comet. Although it's the last thing to draw, we can put it behind everything else by using the stencil. The comet itself uses its own range, so call up the requester (second nature by now) and make this range Six. Place the colours 254 to 256 on the placement bar, with a rate set to 63. This gives a great purple/mauve look which really



sheds when it cycles. OK, that, and from the fill requester, select colour, and ensure range Six is active. Next, switch to the spare page, and draw out a similar shape to our illustration, and watch DPaint fill it in beautifully. You can smear the edges to add realism if you like. Cycle this, and you'll be transported back to the psychedelic 60s! To add the comet behind your work, pick it up as a brush, switch back to the main drawing screen, and call up the stencil requester. Click on the first colour (Black), and click on Invert. OK

that, and place your comet. Turn off the Stencil, and press the TAB key and watch all your hard work burst into life.

STEP 9 - THE FINISHED PRODUCT.



You don't need a desktop video titling program to create fantastic video titles. Jason Holborn reveals the video talents of Deluxe Paint IV.

VIDEO



DPaint's perspective mode can be used to add a whole new dimension to your titles!

Ask any Amiga owner what they automatically associate with Desktop Video and chances are you'll get the same answer over and over again. Fact is, most people see Desktop Video as simply adding titles to video. Of course we all know that video titling is a fairly small aspect of what is possible with an Amiga connected to your desktop video setup: video editing, 3D rendering, video effects and animation are only a small sample of what you can squeeze from your Amiga. We'll be covering all the subjects and more in future issues, so stay tuned if you want to add that little bit of extra sparkle to your home video productions.

Before we get too bogged down in such things as video editing however, let's take a step back with a look at video titling, one aspect of desktop video that is immediately usable to most home video enthusiasts. Time to shatter a misconception, methinks – most people seem to think that you need a video titler to produce titles, but this needn't be the case. Sure, a program like Alternative Image's Big Alternative Scroller or even Scale HV7 (Home Video Tiler – you'll find a demo of this brilliant title on last month's coverdisk!) gives you unrivalled control over your video titles, but there's no reason why you couldn't produce some very nice titles and even video animations with nothing more than a copy of Deluxe Paint.

TYPOGRAPHY

The arrival of Workbench 2.0 and the more recent AGA chip set has made video titling with DPaint that bit easier thanks to the increased colour

palette and, more importantly, outline font support. Getting decent video fonts was perhaps the main stumbling block for most video producers on a budget, but Workbench's new outline fonts give you the power to expand a font to any size with little or no loss in quality whatsoever.

The basic Workbench system disks come with two outline fonts as standard – CSTimes and CSTnumvml (AGFA's version of the standard Helvetica font) – but a whole range of additional

PAGESTREAM VIDEO

One program that I find particularly useful when producing video titles is Soft-Logic's PageStream desktop publishing program. Okay, so PageStream may not seem immediately useful as a video tool, but believe it or not, it is actually great for producing original video titles. Although I'm not trying to claim that PageStream will handle all your video titling needs, there's one aspect of PageStream that handles all video titling programs for dead – its ability to manipulate outline fonts.

As any PageStream owner will tell you, PageStream excels at rotating, stretching and slanting text with no loss in quality. Of course you can't save PageStream documents out as IFF picture files, so you will need a screen grabber such as the PD program QuickGrab (the grabber I use) to grab the PageStream screen as an IFF file. Once this is done, you can then load the grab into Deluxe Paint, point out the sections you don't want and – voila! – high resolution titles that would make even Scale users green with envy! We'll be covering, both using PageStream for video titling and adding outline fonts in general, in the next issue, so if you find



You don't need to buy a dedicated video titling program to imagine fantastic titles – Deluxe Paint is more than man enough for the job! (Or what about women enough for the job – Lisa?)

fonts suitable for video work can be bought from many public domain libraries. Most of these PD fonts are in Adobe Type 1 format, but many Public Domain houses will happily convert them to AGFA Compugraphic format suitable for use with Workbench and DPaint.

All versions of DPaint will happily handle outline fonts but you really do need to get your hands on DPaint Version 4.0 if you want complete control over your fonts, as this version of DPaint allows you to specify the size of the font simply by typing it in to the DPaint font requester. Once you've picked the font in the size you want, DPaint gives you full control over where on the page it should be placed.

Even if you're not completely sure, you can easily pick up your title as a brush, delete the original screen and then paste it down in its new position. DPaint's brush operations come in particularly handy when designing video titles – binches can be resized easily by simply pressing "shift" and then the "Z" key.



PageStream may not seem an obvious choice for video titling, but you'll be surprised just how good it really can be. These titles were grabbed from PageStream and then touched up in DPaint.

PageStream being sold off extremely cheaply, I strongly advise that you get your hands on it!

VISUALS...

You can also rotate a brush to any angle, shear it and even rotate it in three dimensions using DPaint's powerful "perspective" feature.

DPaint VIDEO EFFECTS

Tinting effects such as outlines, shadows and even 3D extrusion are very easy to create in DPaint too. To apply an outline to a title, pick it up as a brush, select the colour you'd like to use for the outline and then press the "o" key and DPaint will automatically add an outline for you. Shadows are just as easy too — just pick up your title, click on the colour that you'd like to use for the shadow using the right mouse button and then stamp the title down with the right mouse button, offset the title by a couple pixels and then stamp it down again with

the left mouse button. Good eh!

Three dimensional "extruded" text can look very professional and it's relatively easy to create in DPaint. Start by picking up your title as a brush and then select the colour that you'd like to use for the extrusion by clicking on the colour with the right mouse button.

Next, select the "line draw" function and then move the mouse pointer over the point where the extrusion is to start, hold down the right mouse button and then drag the mouse pointer slowly across the screen until the height of the extrusion is to your liking. When you release the right mouse button, the extrusion will be pasted onto the screen but you'll still have to resign the title over the top of the extrusion and then paste it

down with the left mouse button to get the full extruded effect.

CONCLUSION

DPaint is ideal for producing video titles, but it does have a number of limitations. For starters, it can only be used to display a maximum of two screens worth of titles, and even then, you cannot produce the sort of fancy wipes, fades and scrolls that are the hallmark of a decent video titling program. One solution would be to buy a video "slideshow" program such as *Elan Performer* — this can be picked up for around £20 these days, so it's hardly going to break the bank. Combine DPaint with *Elan Performer* and you have a video titling system that can easily trade punches with dedicated titles.

TIP TOP TITLING TIPS

With the arrival of the AGA chip set and its fantastic 16.7 million colour palette, not to mention these lovely 256 colour and HAM screen modes, it's all too tempting to go to town when designing your video titles. As any designer will tell you, however, there are rules that equally apply to desktop video designers as they do to artists, desktop publishers and designers in general. Follow these simple rules and your video presentations will not only be easier to read, but far more professional too.

1. When deciding how many colours to use in your titles, the unwritten rule "less is more" definitely applies. Creating titles with hundreds of different colours may look nice on your RGB monitor, but they'll be virtually unreadable once keyed over a live video signal. If you check out the sort of colour palettes the professional video producers use (just sit in front of your television for a few hours and you're bound to see plenty of titles) and you'll notice that they generally hand to restrict their titles to just three or four well-balanced colours.

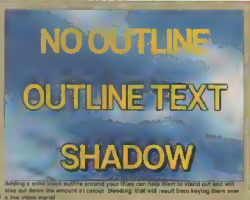
2. Try to avoid colours that are garish. Once again, they may look very nice on your RGB monitor, but they'll look absolutely awful when playbacked. Possibly the worst colour you could use here to be bright red and blue — these look particularly bad when recorded to VHS equipment, although S-VHS and broadcast quality signals carry them better. Once again, the best bet is to take a look at the sort of colours the professionals use — most use whites, light blues and yellows.

It's important to match the colours you use for your titles

with the overall colour of the live video signal that you're going to key the titles over. If the live video signal is very dark, for example, then there's little point in using a dark shade. Similarly, white titles will look awful on your holiday video of you skiing in the South of France. In a case like this, yellows or light blues would stand out much better.

3. Even when using colours that aren't garish, it's always worth putting a solid black outline around your titles to stop them from "bleeding" (i.e. picture quality degradation). Most video titling programs will do this for you, but it's just as easy to do in *Deluxe Paint* — select black, pick up your titles as a brush and then press the "a" key. You can then paste them back down onto the screen. If you're lucky enough to own a program like *Scale HVT* (a demo of which was on last month's coverdisk!), then you're given control over the outline colour and thickness.

4. When choosing which font your titles should be displayed in, try to make sure that the style is both easily readable and large enough for the viewer to read from a distance. A 24-point title may be very readable on your Amiga's monitor, but try playbacking it and then view it from four metres (12 feet) away — unless you've got the eyesight of a hawk, I can



guarantee you that your titles will be virtually unreadable! In high resolution interlaced mode, from sizes anything less than 32 point aren't really that useful. The font type is very important too — ornate fonts such as Zapf Chancery or any freeland font may look nice, but they're not very readable. Try to stick with standard Sans-Serif fonts such as Helvetica or Avanti-Garde. Serif fonts such as Times look nice too.

5. Always plan your titles before you commit yourself. Although it is easy enough to make changes, it only adds to the hassles if you have to create a new monochrome with the necessary changes. If other members of your family or friends are involved and you wish to credit them, think very carefully about the order of these credits — although your mate Dave may think that his contribution was the single most important part of the entire production, chances are that other contributors will have something to say about it. As the old saying goes, "You can't please all of the people all of the time" so be as diplomatic as possible. In general, however, the "Stars" of your production should come first, followed by the production team.

DeluxePaint IV is available from Electronic Arts (tel: 0753 549 442) Price: £89.99.



Certain colours should be avoided as all users. Don't forget that you're trying to grab your message across the screen, not create them!



SHOOT 'EM UP CONSTRUCTION KIT

PART 2

John Kennedy takes a further look at creating a game from scratch, and discovers some of the finer points in the process.

Probably the best way of learning to use any software is to set down and use it, and for this reason, I've been creating some SEUCK games from first principles. Ageing hippy that I am, one of my all time favourite games is Asteroids – that black and greeny-white vector based rock-pummeling classic.

Although rather simple by today's standards, Asteroids offers many opportunities for expansion. Once you have this version working, you'll be able to update it to the latest 1694 specifications. First of all however, a step-by-step guide



It might look like a Star Trek badge, but it's a 1508 Asteroids ship, honest.

1. CREATE THE SPRITES.

The first consideration is to draw the sprites. Unfortunately, here we meet a snag: my drawing capabilities. I hope you can bear with me and my awful scribbles. Just squint a little and wave a hand back and forwards in front of your face and the graphics will look a lot better.

The player's ship in Asteroids is nothing more complicated than a small triangle. It rotates left and right to face in eight directions, so the first task is



Each ship position needs its own sprite. Make a copy 'Object mode' is selected.

to draw eight different ships. Thankfully the "Copy" and "Mirror" options mean we only need to draw three original ships. Start with "Sprite 0" and draw a ship facing upwards. Next, adjust the destination number to 4 and use Copy. Now select sprite 4 and use the mirror button to flip it around so it's facing downwards.

Repeat this operation with two more ship drawings, one facing top right and the other right, until all eight positions are looking good (See fig 1).

The next stage is to create bullets which the ship can fire. You'll need a vertical set, a horizontal set and two angled sets. Again, the Copy and Mirror function will help you out here.

Draw a big mean-looking asteroid, a small flying saucer, some flying saucer type nasty bullets and dozens of explosions for dead spaceships, rocks and saucers.

2. DEFINE OBJECTS

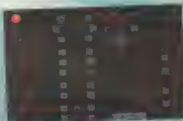
From the object menu, select the "Edit Object" option. Adjust the "Object Number" until Player 1 appears. Now make the player's ship "Direct" instead of "Animate". This will make sure the ship's sprites turn to face the direction the joystick is moved in. Make sure "Hold" is on. For each of the positions around the center point of sprites, select the appropriate sprite and click on the box. Eventually you should have a display like mine, but with much better graphics, of course (See fig 2).

Make the bullet objects in the same way. Remember to switch from "Animate" to "Direct" (See fig 3).

Now create the rock objects. If you designed several different rock sprites you can use the Animate feature to make them appear as though they are tumbling.



The tumbling rock that spins from your ship also needs drawing and fine tuning.



The 'definition'. In the Enemy 0 file screen control how fast the asteroids will travel. The flying saucer can also shoot at you if you set the right values.

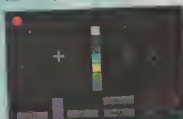
3. ADJUST EDIT ENEMY BITS

Adjust the settings for all the enemy asteroids so that the settings match those shown.

The flying saucer is special as it can fire its own bullets, so set the relevant boxes to some new values depending on how nasty you want the saucer to be (See fig 4).

4. CREATE A BACKGROUND AND SOME SOUND

No game is complete without a starry backdrop. Define a few blocks with white dots and you're away. The easiest way to add sound effects is to load some from a previous game. Save what you've done of your Asteroids game to disk, and then load the game whose effects you wish to



Add an amazing star-field background in a second – use the back editor.

"borrow". Save them individually from the Storage menu, reload your Asteroids game and then load in the sound effects (See fig 5).

5. PLAYER LIMITATIONS.

Copy the settings on the player limitation settings. If you change the ship's speed from 0, it can move around – a bit like the thrust feature of the original game (See fig 6).

Now adjust the play area. Hold the joystick left, and then press fire – the asteroids will move. Do this same for up, down and left so that the asterisks encompass the entire screen.



The Player Bits unit control how much a-ha-ha-ha! and a-ha-ha-ha! your ship can do. Use it to fine-tune gameplay.

Set the start position to be exactly in the middle of the screen.

7. ATTACK WAVES

Taking each enemy asteroid in turn, move them across the screen towards the central ship in a menacing way.

When the game is played, this is how the rocks will appear. Add the evil enemy flying saucers every so often to heighten the overall general excitement!

8. LEVEL CONTROL

Change the level type from scrolling to still and make the delay time 2.000.

9. TEST

Now you're ready to play! The cheat option will give you infinite lives while you fine-tune the enemy attack waves.

When finished turn the colour of your TV down, the brightness up and play some Pink Floyd—time warp!

The finished game in all its glory. Don't give up the day job, eh John?

A4000 AND HARD DRIVE HINTS

When using SEUCK on A4000 Amigas you might find you need to select an older display mode and/or adjust the CPU codes. To do this, reset the computer with the CTRL-AMIGA-AMIGA keypress, and then keep both mouse buttons held down. Select the "Display Options" gadget and make sure the Original chipset is selected. Then click on the "Boot options" gadget and put a tick in the "Disable CPU codes" box. Now select boot and continue as normal. Installing the game on a hard drive is easy: boot from your hard drive as normal, open a window on your normal work partition and then drag the editor SEUCK disk icon into it.

The entire disk will be copied, and a drawer will be created automatically (this is a Workbench 2 and above feature).

Now use the game disk icon in the disk drive as normal. Note: if you want to delete the games that came with it, remember that not all files have icons, so use Show... All Files from the Workbench menu.



WIRED WORLD

Want to connect your computer to the world, for the price of a local call? Join John Armitage as he works his way through the FidoNet system.

Wave seen what FidoNet is, and what it can do for you, but here's a summary for newcomers. FidoNet is a global network of BBS systems which share mail and programs. You can contact your local FidoNet BBS and send Email to any other user, anywhere in the world.

FidoNet is far from being an Amiga specific system, but that really doesn't matter. The people who designed it made sure it worked with a set of standard protocols, so any computer capable of using a modem could take part.

To get connected all you need is an Amiga, a 2400 baud or better modem and a telephone line. You'll also need the telephone number of at least one FidoNet compatible BBS.

THE INS AND OUTS

The first piece of software you'll need is a mailer. This is a program that logs onto your BBS system, uploads your outgoing mail and downloads your



With FidoNet your Amiga is a doorway to the global highway.

incoming mail. The more automatic the process the better, as you don't particularly want to spend a long time on-line. The quicker your mailer (and modem), the cheaper your telephone bill.

The Amiga program, *TrapDoor* is probably the best program to use. It's far from simple, but it does come with a very comprehensive manual which all potential FidoNetters should read every night before going to bed.

Essentially, you adjust some settings to reflect your personal FidoNet address and modem and then create two diewers: one for in mail and one for out mail. When you call the *TrapDoor* program (CLI only at this stage, I'm afraid) the program will automatically dial your local BBS and perform the necessary exchange of mail. *TrapDoor* is full of

Amiga specific features such as *ARexx*, so with a bit of time you can soon make it as complicated or as simple as you like.

Theoretically this is the only program you'll need, but reality is another story. To start with using the standard Amiga ED program to read and write Email is extremely tedious. There are some excellent third parties in the PD, although I have to say that ASDG's *Cygnus Ed v3.5* is my favourite.

If this still isn't enough, and you want a nice Intuition based front end, then track down a program called *Point Manager*. This is a program which works in conjunction with a mailer program such as *TrapDoor*. *Point Manager* will make reading and writing Email messages a lot simpler, it even has its own editor!

Using a well configured FidoNet system like this is a dream. For almost negligible cost, you can soon be involved in conversations all around the world. Replying to Email is only a matter of entering text at your own keyboard, at your own pace. The system automatically sends on your replies when you want to. Welcome to the world! Ask your favourite PD library about the software mentioned above. Alternatively, buy the *AmiNet CD Rom* collection as it contains many bits of FidoNet specific programs. **CU**

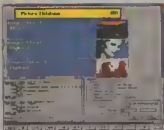
NEXT MONTH

More tales from the FidoNet as John Armitage tells you how to avoid viruses.

New Software for a New Year



Business Applications



Both SBase Personal and Professional are full-featured, fully relational and powerful databases with pull-down menus, multiple windows and full access to your Amiga's multi-tasking environment and they are now compatible with AmigaDOS 3.0 and the AGA chip set.

SBase Professional includes a powerful database management language and supports dBase. Please call for our data sheets on these superb products.

We are pleased to announce that HiSoft is now the authorized UK contact point for Onyx's SBase 4 Amiga products (formerly known as Superbase). We have stock of both SBase Personal 4.1g and SBase Professional 4.1g and offer full technical support for these programs with our Silver and Gold support options. We can also offer upgrades from earlier versions - please call or fax for details of upgrades and technical support.

SBase 4

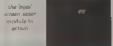
Professional
Personal



Utilities



This is the utility that you simply must own! Maxon Magic is a fantastic combination of 15 different screen savers, a system event sound player and many amusing sampled sounds that will not only be incredibly useful but will give you and your friends endless enjoyment as well.



Maxon Magic



The Maxon Magic screen saver works in all modes, even with graphic cards, and offers you a choice of 15 different amusing and entertaining modules such as Aquarion, Flong, Frostfall, Flareworks, Crazy Worms, Messages, Clock etc. As if that isn't enough value for money, Maxon Magic also lets you assign sounds to most system events including Window/Screen open & close events, Alerts, Keys, Mouse clicks, Requests and more. Choose from the many sounds provided or simply use your own sampled IFFs.

With Maxon Magic your Amiga will never look or sound the same again!



Video/Music

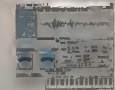
VIDEOMASTER



The best-value real-time video digitiser you can buy! VideoMaster gives you the ability to record real-time monochrome video with sound in 25 frames per second as well as quality full-screen audio from your cassette or video recorder. VideoMaster RGB includes our own colour splitter, ColourMaster, and produces amazing quality colour stills. VideoMaster AGA works on the A1200 and A600 connects via the PCMCIA slot for extra speed and freedom to use other peripherals, allows high quality stereo sound and supports HiAMa and HiAME up to 640 x 512 resolution for stills.



ColourMaster is a new electronic colour splitter which works in conjunction with VideoMaster for stunning colour stills.



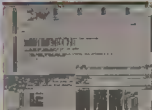
Clarity16 is our premier sound sampler allowing mix-ups to 32KHz in 16 bit stereo and up to 40KHz in 16 bit mono on an A500, accelerated machines can handle faster sampling rates. The software provides extensive features including full edit control, a MIDI keyboard emulator, a sample sequencer, many special effects and FFT analysis. Version 1.5 has an up-to-date Workbench 3 look in its own window and is fully compatible with other Amiga.



Megalocloud is the new 8-bit, stereo direct-to-disk sampler package. The software is packed full of easy-to-use editing features, special effects and extras such as the ability to print waveforms and sample information. The package allows sampling up to 8KHz mono and 16KHz stereo to memory and up to 28KHz stereo to hard disk on an A1200. Supplied with a hardware volume control and an extensive 144-page manual, Megalocloud is impressive value at only £34.95.



Programming



SAS/C 6.5

The standard C compiler for AmigaDOS gets a major upgrade for 1994, now the SAS/C Development System (version 6.5) supports translation of C++ files with Streams and Complex libraries allowing you to write Object Oriented code.

The C++ translator is compatible with CFFRONT Version 2.1 from AT&T. There's an improved preprocessor, optimiser, more efficient stack allocation and structure return code generation.

There are many other improvements including an enhanced instruction scheduler for the 68040 CPU and the 688C16 status coprocessor, an improved profiler, a front-end interface to grep, support for C++ within CodeNote and more. HiSoft's 3.5 inch floppy sets are supplied. Upgrades start from £99.95 - please call for pricing information.

Prices

Clarity16 new price	£129.95
Megalocloud	£34.95
VideoMaster AGA	£69.95
VideoMaster A500	£79.95
VideoMaster RGB	£129.95
ColourMaster	£69.95
SAS/C 6.5	£329.00
SBase Personal	£129.00
SBase Professional	£249.00
Maxon Magic	£29.95

All products on this page are either available now or by the end of January 94 - please call to confirm availability.

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BACK TO BASICS WITH BLITZ BASIC 2

Jason Holborn puts on his leotard and gets into shape with *Blitz Basic 2*. Eat your heart out Mr Motivator!

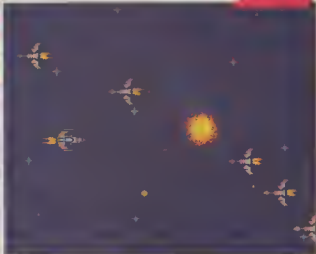
Regardless of the type of game you'd like to write with *Blitz Basic 2*, chances are you'll want to use sprites sooner or later. Fact is, sprites are a fundamental ingredient of any modern arcade game, be it a common or garden shoot 'em up, a *Street Fighter* beating combat game or even one of those hard-to-categorise "weird" games that magazine game reviewers seem to love so much these days.

What you may not have realised, however, is just how important sprites are. Take a shoot 'em up, for example, virtually every object that you see moving on the screen is a sprite—the player's ship is a sprite, the attacking alien spacecrafts are sprites and even the missiles and explosions that litter the screen are sprites.

With the advent of the Amiga, the term 'sprite' has become something of a generic term that refers to any object that moves around the screen, rather than a particular type of object. If you know your Amiga's hardware, then you'll already know that the Amiga offers two types of sprites—the technically correct "hardware sprites" and the more commonly used "blitter objects" (called "software



Sprites are used in most arcade games—in a shoot 'em up, for example, all the moving objects you see on the screen are sprites.



sprites"). Both have their own individual strengths and weaknesses which are as follows:

HARDWARE SPRITES

Hardware sprites are generated by the Amiga's display hardware and are completely separate from the screen "bitmap". As a result, hardware sprites stay the same size regardless of the resolution of the screen that is displaying them. By default, all hardware sprites are displayed in low resolution. However, if you're lucky enough to own an AGA-based Amiga, hardware sprites can also be displayed in high resolution. However the Amiga imposes quite a few restrictions on

the size, the number of colours and the number of hardware sprites that you can display. At their simplest level, only eight hardware sprites can be displayed at once (one of which is the mouse pointer) although you can re-use hardware sprites by performing some clever trickery with the Amiga's copper display co-processor! Hardware sprites are restricted to just four colours too, one of which is transparent. Once again, however, you can get around this by doubling up sprites so that two sprites are used to display one fifteen colour sprite. The size of sprites is restricted to just 16 pixels across although you can join together several sprites to form a much larger single sprite. However hardware sprites move very quickly indeed, which is why most games use them for missiles and other objects that have to move across the screen very quickly.

SOFTWARE SPRITES

However, only a few computers can utilise hardware sprites. As far as I'm aware, only the Amiga, the Commodore 64 and the old Atari 800 offer hardware sprites. Software sprites, on the other hand, are used on most micros as they need very little specialist hardware to incorporate them. In the case of the Amiga's software sprites, they're drawn directly into the screen bitmap by the Amiga's blitter chip, hence Amiga software sprites are more commonly referred to as "blitter objects" (or "bobs").

The great thing about blitter objects is that their size is restricted only by the amount of chip memory inside your Amiga. Bobs also don't suffer from the same colour limitations as hardware sprites—it's perfectly possible to create a bob with up to 64 colours (or even 256 when the AGA version of *Blitz*)



Blitz doesn't have its own sprite editor so all "shapes" have to be designed in an RVG paint program like OmniDraw.

GET INTO SHAPE

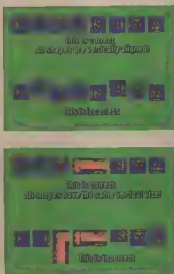
Designing shapes in a paint program that will be suitable for use within the Blitz ShapesMaker utility isn't as straightforward as you might first think. However, follow these simple guidelines and you'll go far wrong:

ALIGNMENT

Because the ShapesMaker utility extracts shapes from an IFF file in horizontal strips, it's very important that each row of shapes is aligned on exactly the same line across the screen. If a shape is just a single pixel too far up the screen or too far down, the ShapesMaker will not recognise it.

SIZE

Blitz isn't fussy about the horizontal size of your shapes, but it is very fussy about their vertical size. Once again, this all comes down to the way that the ShapesMaker utility scans through the IFF file. As a result, all shapes that are in the same row must be of exactly the same vertical size. If, for example, the first shape is 32 pixels down, then all the other shapes on the same horizontal row must be that size too.



- » In released! Because the Amiga's blitter simply pushes a blob down onto the screen, bobs are treated as nothing more than an extension of the current bitmap. This does mean, however, that the resolution of a bob is dictated by the resolution of the current screen.

The only real limitation of bobs is the amount of time they take to be drawn. The Amiga's blitter may be able to run rings around even the fastest processor, but drawing bobs still takes time – much longer than it takes the Amiga's display chip to draw hardware sprites, that's for sure. However, thanks to Blitz Basic's quickness, this minor speed limitation does not affect the quality of your code.

BOB'S YOUR UNCLE

Blitz Basic supports both software and hardware sprites through an impressive set of commands that give you full control over their placement and movement. We won't be discussing hardware sprites for a couple of months or so, but as any games programmer will tell you, software sprites are far more versatile so we'll be concentrating on them instead for the meantime.

In Blitz Basic, blitter objects have a new name that is relatively unheard of amongst Amiga programmers – for reasons known only to Mark Sibly and the rest of the crew at Acid Software. Blitz refers to its blitter objects as 'shapes'. This can be confusing for the first time Blitz user, but you'll soon get used to it. Before you can write a program that makes use of shapes, you need to create some shapes. Unlike AMOS, Blitz doesn't actually offer a dedicated object editor (or 'shape editor') so you have to create your shapes using an IFF paint program like Deluxe Paint instead. This really isn't too much of a hind, as even most AMOS owners use DPaint for designing bobs anyway.

Once you've drawn your shapes in DPaint, you must then save them onto disk as an IFF picture file which is then loaded into the Blitz's 'Shapes-Maker'

utility which is bundled with the Blitz package. This very simple utility scans through your IFF image and picks out any shapes that it finds which are then saved onto a disk as a shapes file which can later be loaded into your Blitz program. Although the ShapesMaker utility is very simple, it's important that you follow a few guidelines when designing your shapes, so it's worth taking time to read the box but above to find out how it's done.

BLIT ON THE SIDE

Unlike AMOS, Blitz Basic 2 doesn't just give you a single set of commands for drawing shapes onto the screen. Because of the technicalities involved, you're provided with three separate sets of shape drawing commands, each of which has its own individual strengths and weaknesses. Which set you use depends upon the type of game you're writing and the screen mode that your game uses. Let's take a look at each 'blit mode' in turn.

BLIT

Blitz's simplest method of drawing shapes onto the screen is the BLIT mode. Although this is undoubtedly the fastest mode available, it does have a number of disadvantages that make it somewhat less useful for games programming. For starters, this mode does not allow you to keep track of where the shapes have been drawn – once they've been drawn onto the bitmap, Blitz forgets all about them. If you then decide that you'd like to move a shape that has been drawn in this mode, it's up to you to manually remove the old shape image from the screen, restore the background image and then redraw the shape at its new position.

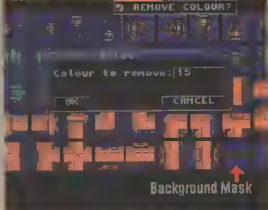
QBLIT

QBLIT mode is somewhat more useful as it does allow you to keep track of any shapes that are

MASKING

When designing shapes, it often helps to set aside a single colour which can be used as a background 'mask' colour. Not only does this help to keep a check on both the size (using a background mask will allow you to create shapes that are vertically smaller than the rest of the shapes on the same line) and vertical alignment of your shapes, but it also helps to keep your shapes centred. When you convert your shapes image to a shape file with the ShapesMaker utility, you can ask it to automatically remove the background mask so that it is made transparent by making use of the ShapesMaker's 'Remove Colour' option. Simply tell it which colour you've used as your background mask and the Shapes Maker will remove it, when the shapes are converted.

PROJECT OPTIONS



drawn onto the screen. Whenever a shape is redrawn at a new position on the screen, Blitz will automatically remove the old shape image from the screen.

As always, there has to be a down side – QBLIT mode does not restore the background image and, therefore, it is probably best suited to games that either use a blank background or a dual playfield fixed display.

Surprisingly, QBLIT mode is the most popular blitting mode amongst Blitz games programmers despite its obvious shortcomings. Because of its obvious speed advantages over BLIT mode, most Blitz games use a combination of a dual playfield display and the QBLIT mode to allow shapes to be moved rapidly across a background.

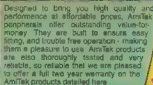
Take the Blitz demo game BuzzBar, for example – because BuzzBar uses a dual playfield display, the shapes are drawn onto the foreground playfield using QBLIT mode whilst the background remains untouched in the back ground playfield.

BBLIT

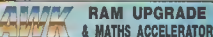
The most capable blitting mode available is BBLIT mode. It offers most of the advantages of QBLIT mode but, unlike QBLIT mode, it also automatically restores the background image whenever a shape is moved. BBLIT mode is most like the blitter object commands in AMOS as it handles everything for you. BBLIT mode is rather slow, however, so it is rarely used in arcade games that require lots of fast-moving shapes.

NEXT MONTH

Now that we've looked out how to create a shapes file and the different types of 'blit mode' that Blitz Basic 2 has to offer, I'll be demonstrating how to use shapes within your own programs in the next issue. Stay tuned!



AMIGA PERIPHERALS



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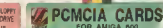
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6. Repair	6. Repair
7. Testing	7. Testing
8. Calibration	8. Calibration
9. Configuration	9. Configuration
10. Upgrade	10. Upgrade
11. Backup	11. Backup
12. Recovery	12. Recovery
13. Logging	13. Logging
14. Reporting	14. Reporting
15. Configuration	15. Configuration
16. Upgrade	16. Upgrade
17. Backup	17. Backup
18. Recovery	18. Recovery
19. Logging	19. Logging
20. Reporting	20. Reporting

Before buying these drives, Amiga's, look the line is made a mechanism that has all the features, quality and reliability that Amiga owners have been crying out for. After that, you'll want to buy a Sanyo mechanism. It proved to

- HIGH QUALITY 3 1/2" SONY MECHANISM
- ENABLE/DISABLE SWITCH
- BUILT-IN ANTI-CLICK FEATURE
- SWITCHABLE ANTI-VIRUS MODE
- 75Kb ACCESS TIME
- DAISY CHAINABLE VIA THRU PORT
- LOW POWER USAGE
- NO NEED FOR EXTERNAL PSU
- COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGAS
- 2 YEAR WARRANTY





Dave Smithson demonstrates how to have an argument with your AREXX scripts without ending up in hospital.

INSIDE AREXX

Very few AREXX scripts will run without some form of user interaction and control, especially if the script is designed as a general purpose tool. Up until now, the scripts that we've been writing have been controlled by the user via the very useful "pull" command which acts in a very similar manner to BASIC's "input" command. Whilst this form of interaction certainly does the job, it's not very practical if you want to use your AREXX script within an AmigaDOS script (batch) file. Say, for example, you wanted to write an AREXX script that was controlled by the output from another program. Using the "pull" command, you'd be forced to enter the information yourself via the

keyboard but wouldn't it be so much nicer if you could write AREXX scripts that worked like AmigaDOS commands?

Being an AREXX programmer, I'm sure that you already have a basic working knowledge of how AmigaDOS commands work (let's face it, the AREXX language is fairly inaccessible without some knowledge of AmigaDOS). To be perfectly honest, there isn't really a lot of difference between AmigaDOS commands and AREXX scripts (well, apart from the language that was used to write them).

AmigaDOS commands have one feature that makes them useful for scripts — command line arguments. Command line arguments are a lot better than the interactive prompts that we've been using so far as they allow you to feed a script all the instructions it needs in order to run, saving you the trouble of getting on with the job. Say, for example, you wrote a script similar to the AmigaDOS "Delete" command. If you had to feed the script the name of each and every file that you wanted to delete as and when the script was ready to process it, you'd have to sit in front of your Amiga and wait for the script to process each file. By feeding the script all the filenames (or even a wildcard pattern) from the command line, you could leave it to do its stuff whilst you got on with something more productive (isn't it like a wonderful idea?). And the following AREXX comments in line arguments to

AREXX scripts also makes AREXX an ideal candidate for writing your own AmigaDOS "commands" without having to resort to more complicated languages like Assembly or C.

COMMAND PERFORMANCE

Not surprisingly, AREXX supports command line arguments using a very powerful function called "Arg()". Adding command line arguments to your scripts is surprisingly simple (so — certainly a lot easier than it is with a language like C or even assembly). What you may not have realised is that AREXX supports command line arguments without the need for extra code — yes, even the scripts that have been examining over recent months (we'll have escaped command line arguments if we had known how to process them). As it was, even if you had fed a script command line arguments, AREXX simply ignored them.

So how does the Arg() function work? Well, it's very simple really. Whenever you run an AREXX script and pass it command line arguments, all the arguments that you pass are held internally within the AREXX interpreter. This string is automatically handed to the Arg() function. All you have to do to access it is to interrogate the string that is returned by the Arg() function using a line similar to the following arguments = Arg(1)

ARG(1)



Whenever you pass arguments to an AREXX script, the Amiga stores that info in a variable called ARG. This variable is available to you via the Arg() function.

STRINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS

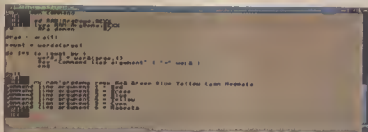
Both AREXX arrays and indeed the string functions that the above script uses are new concepts that we haven't covered in previous issues so let's take a quick look at them before we move on any further. First, AREXX arrays. If you've ever used a programming language like C or Basic, then you should already be familiar with exactly what an array is. Put simply, an array is a special type of variable that can hold more than one item of information — a whole lot of numbers or strings, for example. The great thing about arrays is that they allow you to bunch together and organise a lot of data items under a single name.

If you're writing a database, for example, all names could be stored in an array called "Names". In AREXX arrays are particularly powerful — unlike Basic — you don't need to tell AREXX how many individual items of data you wish to store in an array. What's more, you don't even have to define an array before it's used — simply start using an array and AREXX will automatically create it for you. Each separate item of data within an array is accessed by appending a dot symbol (".") followed by the number that tells AREXX where in the array you'd like the data to be held to the end of the array's name. Say, for example, you wanted to store the surname "Smith" in an array called "Names" at position two. If you need to do is to use the following line of code:

```
Names[2] = "Smith"
```

If you look very carefully at the first demonstration listing, you'll also notice that it makes use of two functions that we haven't yet encountered — Words() and Word(). Although their names are rather similar, their uses are somewhat different. The first of the two functions, Words(), is really nothing more than a word counting function — all it does is to tell you how many words there are in a particular string. This is very important when extracting arguments from the command line as you may often already know exactly how many arguments the user has passed. By passing the output from "Arg()" to the Words() function, however, you'll know exactly how many arguments are in the string.

The second function, Word(), is very similar to the "Scan()" function in the C programming language. What it does is to allow you to extract a given word from a string which is then transferred to a second variable. All you have to do is pass it the name of the string that you're extracting a word from and the position of the word in the string (which word it is — two, three or five etc) and the Word() function will do the rest. Cervez stuff ah!



Adding the ability to accept command line arguments to your AREXX script is surprisingly simple.

This line simply transfers the string of command line arguments to an AREXX variable called "arguments". Once the string has been transferred, you can then gain access to the arguments embedded within the string using a combination of AREXX's powerful string manipulation functions. If you're only passing a single argument to a script, then the string returned by the Arg() function will contain only a single argument and so it can be used without the need to strip out individual words. It's worth noting, however, that each word that you pass to an AREXX script is treated as a single argument and so if you were to pass something like CUJ AMIGA as a single argument, AREXX would treat it as two arguments.

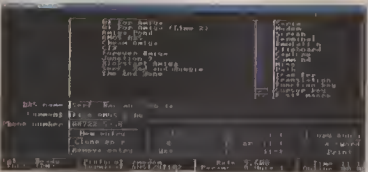
In most cases, your AREXX script will expect to be fed more than one argument and so you need some way to extract each argument from the string that is returned by the Arg() function. Thankfully, due to a combination of AREXX's powerful arrays feature and string handling commands, this is very useful. Here's a demonstration listing how to strip out arguments.

```
/*AREXX 'Arg()' function demonstration
/*Get arguments from command line*/
cmdline = Arg()
```

```
/*How many arguments?*/
count = Words(cmdline)
```

```
/*Set up argument array
Do loop=1 to count
  /*Extract next word into array
  argument(loop) = Word(cmdline, loop)
```

```
/*Display word...*/
Say "Argument" loop "-" argument(loop)
End
Exit
```



Command line arguments are particularly useful when writing general purpose scripts to control external applications such as the Term 3.2 communications program.

PARSE IN ACTIONS

Below is the complete listing for a short program called VAT Calc that demonstrates how to write a tool that makes use of command line arguments. The program provides two functions -- it adds VAT to a value and also takes it away if you need to know a price minus VAT. Even if you're not VAT registered, you may find this simple tool very handy when calculating the price you have to pay when ordering goods from mail order companies that quote their prices minus VAT. Simply pass it the VAT rate as a percentage (17.5, for example), the price and either an "M" if you wish the VAT to be taken off the price or "P" if you wish VAT to be added. Internally, the program is nothing special. The only function that it uses that we haven't already covered is "Trunc()", that simply allows you to control how many decimal places in a floating point number are displayed. All you need to do is to pass the floating point number followed by the number of decimal places required and the Trunc() function truncates the value to the required number of decimal places. Give it a try!

```
/*VAT Calculator
/*Parse Arg RATE AMOUNT OPT
Say "VAT Calculator"
If RATE = "" then do
  Say "Usage: VATCalc <VatRate>
  <amount> <D>minus/<P>plus"
Exit
End
If OPT="P" then do
  VATAMOUNT = AMOUNT/100*RATE
  VATAMOUNT = Trunc(AMOUNT+VATAMOUNT, 2)
Say "£"AMOUNT "-" VAT = £"VATAMOUNT
End
If OPT="M" then do
  VATAMOUNT = AMOUNT/(100+RATE)*RATE
  VATAMOUNT = Trunc(AMOUNT-VATAMOUNT, 2)
Say "£"AMOUNT "-" VAT = £"VATAMOUNT
End
Exit
```

from within a string. If, for example, you passed it a string such as "CUJAMIGA Magazine", it would return CUJ AMIGA Magazine. Anyway, here's a quick listing that demonstrates the Parse Arg command in action.

```
/*Parse Arg demonstration
```

```
/*Get command line arguments*/
Parse Arg arg.1 arg.2 arg.3 arg.4
```

```
/*Strip out leading characters*/
arg.4 = Space(arg.4)
```

```
/*Display arguments...*/
Do loop=1 to 4 By 1
  Say "Argument" loop "-" arg(loop)
End
Exit
```

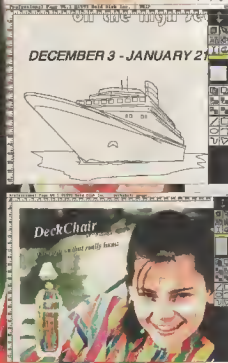
NEXT MONTH

If all this talk about arguments hasn't got you too frustrated then stay tuned for next month's issue in which we'll be taking a look at how to use AREXX to automate the operations of another program. Many of you have asked for a round up of books available that cover the AREXX language so, just to prove how much we care as to what you fellows, you can look forward to a mega AREXX books roundup too!

DESKTOP PUBLISHING WORKSHOP

PART 1 In the first of a two-part tutorial, John Dodds tells you all you need to know about desktop publishing on your Amiga.

As the professional packages are likely a little more expensive, even budget desktop publishers should consider spending the little bit extra rather than planning for the cheaper and more limited PageSetter.



Desktop publishing doesn't have to cost a fortune. The secret is to learn and avoid what you can do, and then work within those limitations. Plenty can be done with just the bare essentials, and to a fairly high quality. But what exactly are the bare essentials? Three things—computer, software, printer. That's it.

As far as the computer is concerned, the Amiga you are using now will do fine—even if it is an A500. If you are reading this with a view to buying an Amiga to desktop publish on a budget, the extra money you'll pay for the faster A1200 will serve you well. If you can't stretch that far, go for an A500+ rather than an A600 as there are more add-ons available for the A500+. You will need a minimum of 2Mb of ram. Now don't go thinking that 2Mb is all the memory you need. It is the minimum. That means that the software will run and you'll be able to use it, but at some point you are going to run into the hated "not enough memory" requester. This can easily happen half-way through designing just one page, it depends what you have on that page. And then, even if you've got a complete page designed, printing this thing requires more memory, so you might get a get lost requester then, or, more likely, bits missing from the printed output. The only solution to this problem is to throw memory at it. If you can't afford more memory, then you will have to restrain the creative juices and design less complex pages. To desktop publish multiple-page documents you will need upwards of 4Mb

of expansion memory.

WHICH PRINTER?

The general advice is to go for the best one you can afford, but there are certain things you must keep in mind. You must understand that this output from 9-pin and 24-pin colour dot matrix printers is nothing to be proud of. With a brand new ribbon in the printer you can almost always get three or four quite decent pages, but the ribbons get dirty so quickly that pretty soon all your colours are looking dull and streaky. There is no magic wand that can be waved to cure the problem, you can't buy software or printer drivers or anything else that can make a dirty ribbon print brighter colours; all you can do is buy a new ribbon. At £15-£20 a ribbon, it can work out damn expensive if you are printing lots of colour documents.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you shouldn't buy a colour dot-matrix printer, I'm simply telling you that you must not expect miracles from them. For minims you need to spend upwards of £500.

It is, however, a difficult story for mono printers. With a little experience and ingenuity you can do wonders with an inexpensive 9-pin dot-matrix, but for DTP output on a budget you can't beat the little Canon BJ-10 portable bubble jet. Considering it costs just £200, the 360 dpi output is superb. You will always get some slight banding, but then you'll get that from a 9-pin dot matrix as well.

To eradicate banding, again you need to spend more money.

Higher output resolution is much

more important than colour. And you don't need a colour printer. If you are doing anything that is going to be mass reproduced, it is going to be cheaper to approach a High Street print shop or a firm of printers, and neither of these will be able to do very much with artwork printed on an expensive Inkjet colour printer, let alone a 9-pin dot matrix. Mono artwork can be reproduced quickly, easily and very cheaply. If you want colour, then "spot" colours can be used, and for the print shop or firm of printers to do this they don't need colour artwork, they need mono artwork and a note telling them what colour toner to put in the photocopier or what colour link to put in the printing press.

Reassign yourself to the fact that unless you are willing to spend a few thousand pounds you will not be able to produce anything that even approaches full colour, like the pages of this magazine for example.

JARGON BUSTERS

9-PIN/24-PIN PRINTER: A low quality output device that strikes wide pins onto an inked ribbon in order to make marks on paper.

DPI: Dots per inch.

DYE SUBLIMATION: A method of thermal transfer printing that melts coloured wax on to paper to print up to 16.8 million true colours and so produce rich, continuous tone, photographic-quality images.

FULL COLOUR: Material published using the four-colour CMYK printing process.

Me, Megabyte, a unit used for the measurement of memory/storage capacity.

POSTSCRIPT: A page description language that has become the standard for desktop publishing.

REPRO: Short for reproduction.

ple. Instead, think about how spot colours can be used to enhance your work. You can also introduce colour into your work by using tints and washes, and again you don't need a colour printer for these. In fact you don't need a printer at all for tints, the firm doing the reproducing should be able to do that for you, all you do is tell them where to put the tint.

But for one-offs and short runs you will probably want to print them at home on your own printer. In which case you must experiment a bit, discover which colours print best and stick to using just those colours. Don't expect to be able to print HAM or P55-colour picture and get output that looks just like it does on the screen. That's difficult enough to do with high-end colour printers that cost thousands of

PRINTERS/BUREAUS

When buying any printer it is very important to check that there is a suitable Amiga printer driver for it. No good buying me a colour StarJet model for five quid if it won't work with your Amiga.

A good bet if you are after something at the cheaper end of the market is the Citizen Swift 90, a monochrome 9-pin printer for which there is a colour option available. But pin printers, both 9-pin and 24-pin, are more suited for text output than graphics, as they suffer quite badly from banding—regular horizontal lines that stretch across the page. If you want some semblance of quality then start looking at inkjets and bubble jet printers.

For monochrome output you can't go wrong with the Canon BJ-230. It enables you to print on to A3 paper and its output is as good as entry level. If you need colour, check out the Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 550C or the new Canon BJ-600. Both of these provide good enough output for rough graphic results. To get the best from these printers you need to add the cost of a post-environment package like Speed that comes with suitable drivers.

Ink based printers offer limited options when it comes to resolution, the maximum being 360 dpi with the Canon



John Kennedy and Mat Broomfield pit their wits, once more, against some of the hardest technical problems since the invention of Comms packages.

ICON SEE CLEARLY



I haven't had my machine long, but I've learned to use Workbench 3.0 pretty well. But I have a problem if I am designing or altering icons - when I draw the icons everything is fine and in colour. However, when I save them, all the colours disappear and the icon is saved as a black and white mess. Am I doing something wrong or is there a bug in the IconEd program?
Chris Bowick, Stonygate, Leicester.

An icon can only choose 16 colours from the existing Workbench 3.0 pen colours. If there are only two Workbench colours, the icon will appear in black and white. This is the first thing you should check and try updating the number of colours to eight or 16 with the *Palette* program screen mode.

The *Workbench 3.0 IconEd* program does have a few quirks when it comes to colour. It turns out most of these can be solved by using the *IconEd* program which came with Workbench 2 - perhaps you know someone with an A500 or A500+ who can let you use their copy.

HARD DRIVE BARGAIN



I have a hard drive from a PCII. Is there anyway in which I can use it with my Amiga 500? I hope there is, please help!
Scott Plumridge, St George, Bristol.

The hard drive from a PC is likely to conform to the IDE standard. Unlike the A1200 or A500, to use it with the A500 will need to buy an IDE interface - try Trilogic on 0274 691115 and see if they can help you.

A word of advice to anyone trying to use PC hard drives: not all IDE drives are completely compatible. Some drives will only boot from cold (that is, not from a CTRL-Amiga-Amiga reset) and some won't boot at all. The problem

HERE THEY ARE FOLKS - THE Q&A TEAM



JOHN KENNEDY
They call him Big John at his local. We just call him every month to tell us about Locale.



MAT BROOMFIELD
Our Mat found out all about drives this month: CDTV drives, IDE drives, whilst drives...

is one of speed - sometimes the computer is too fast, sometimes the drive is too fast. Take care to ensure the drive you buy is compatible with your model of Amiga - drives which work on the A500 don't always work with the A1200 and vice versa.

Some drives will hang with long data transfers - one possible solution is to use *HDToolbox* to adjust the maximum speed to a smaller value. Please don't mess around with this program if you don't know what you are doing! Pressing the wrong gadget can erase all the data and an accidental Low Level Format will even destroy the drive permanently.

DRIVE BOTHER



I have recently added a GVP A530 Turbo Hard Drive to my Amiga 500+. To do this I had to disconnect my Amiga A570 CD-ROM drive, as it uses the same connection. Could you please let me know how I can reconnect this with the hard drive in place? I have been told that a Centronics cable would do the trick and if so, where could I purchase one?
Mr. W. Graham, Dunbar, Scotland.

I don't know who told you about the Centronics cable, but they are way off target. A Centronics cable will only connect the parallel port of the Amiga to a parallel printer - Centronics is the name of the parallel data protocol. Perhaps your friend was misled by the trailer-looking 25 way connector at the rear of the GVP A530. This is, in fact, a SCSI interface, which will allow you to use other SCSI drives (including CD-ROM drives).

Unfortunately, the Commodore A570 CD-ROM drive isn't a SCSI device. The only interface it does have is the edge connector with which it interfaces with the Amiga 500. What you need is a card which will duplicate this edge connector, and I believe Data! (Tel: 071 500 6600) make such a device.

Unfortunately, you will have a tremendously hard time using it, as the second connector is at right angles, pointing upwards. Secondly, there is no guarantee that the CD-ROM drive and the hard drive will work together.

My suggestion is to scour your local paper for the cheapest secondhand A500 you can buy. Then use the Parallel linking software (supplied on last month's cover disk) to link the two computers.

WHY ON WHY?



Please, please help me as I'm at my wits end. When I read your review of *The Publisher* I thought "brilliant" until I found out it doesn't work on the A1200. Why? If I use *Relokick* will it work?

P.M. Begguley, whereabouts unknown.

The *Publisher* (reviewed in the December 1993 issue of *CU AMIGA*) won't get on with the AGA

chipset present in the A1200 and A4000, which means no matter what *Kickstart* you use (*Relokick* will swap from 3.x to 1.3) the program will continue to fail. This is a pity as it quite a good program. However, the similarly priced *PageSetter III* by GoldDisk (available from Silca Systems, tel:081 309 1111) will work fine. So get that instead. It's good.

MAGIC WORKBENCH



I've noticed that a lot of screenshots in your magazine seem to use a new Workbench, with different colours and icons. Please can I have a copy?
J. Runner, Bangor, Wales.

Anyone can have a copy - just get the program shareware disk from your favourite PD library called *Magic Workbench*. I notice that 17 Bit Software (Tel:0294 366982) have included it in their collection as number 2785.

AMIGA NATIVE



I'm interested in learning more about the AGA chipset and the new Workbench features. Is there a new hardware manual coming out?
Nicholas Barnett, Chelsea, London.

Well, according to Commodore's Sharon McGuffin there should be a new set of Rom Kernel manuals released in the UK by October this year. These manuals should contain all the intuition-friendly coding you'll need, but I would say it is extremely unlikely that there will be a hardware manual containing the same degree of detail that was made available for the A500/A2000 machines.

In the meantime, the Commodore Amiga 3.0 Native Developer Pack is now available. This five disk pack contains a heck of a lot of essential programming details, and any budding A1200 programmer should send a cheque or postal order for £23.50 made out to CBM (UK) Ltd. to Sharon McGuffin, CBM (UK) Ltd., Commodore House, The Switchback, Gardner Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7XA. Please write your cheque number on the back of any cheques. Please note that this set won't teach you to program, nor does it contain any programming languages. Instead it is full of example code (mostly C) and includes the famous "INCLUDES" that are needed to access the operating system.

If you really, really want to know some AGA hardware details, get the latest *AmigaGuide* version of Commodore's *How to Code* document from a good PD library or BBS. Writing programs which directly use the hardware will mean your program will only work on the current AGA machines. A lot of people get upset about this, and call you silly names if you ask about it on the CIB BBS. Mind you, when asked how to duplicate an effect originally achieved

by hardware-hitting using the OS, they went strangely quiet and said they would get back to me. That was six months ago.

PERPLEXED AND CONFUSED

For a while now I have been thinking about upgrading my 1.3 Workbench to 2.0 I own an A500 with 1Mb of RAM but I am unsure of some things

1. How much will the upgrade be?
2. Will it affect any of my games/programs?
3. Call it stupid, but how much memory will I have without my 0.5 Mb upgrade?
4. Will I need to take my Amiga to the shop to get it fitted?

James Edwards, Barnt Green, Worcestershire.

Wow, I would have thought this letter was a year late if it arrived last year. If you can possibly afford to buy an A1200, do it tomorrow – it will save you a lot of hassle. I really don't know how you can continue to use the horrible orange and blue of Workbench 1.3.

Failing all that, here are some answers:

1. Looking in the current Silica Systems catalogue, the ROM switching hardware is £10, and the new (ish) ROM is about £20.

2. No, because you can switch back to the old ROM at the first hint of any problems. Only very old programs should fail.

3. 1Mb of RAM minus 0.5Mb of RAM leaves 0.5Mb. Will you need to remove the memory? Workbench 2.0 will use it just as well as Workbench 1.3.

4. No, you can fit the ROM switcher yourself. As I said, please get an A1200 instead. If you can't, you can be sure that there will be a lot of secondhand A500 hardware around as users upgrade. Put a wanted advertisement in your local paper.

PC CD-ROM PDQ

I own an A570 CDTV add-on and a 1Mb Amiga 500 with Workbench 1.3. When I bought it the box said it was compatible with ISO9660. I read somewhere that this means it can run PC CD-ROM software. It is this true could you please tell me what PC disk software I can run. Would an AT-ONCE PC emulator allow me to run them?

I know the CDTV is not compatible with CD32 programs, but can it run Apple Mac CDs? Finally, do you know of any CDTV based clubs or magazines so I can find out more?

Richard Johnson, Tywardreath, Cornwall.

Yes, the CDTV drive is compatible with ISO9660 – the usual standard for CD-ROMS. However, all this means is that the data can be accessed – it doesn't mean the data can be understood. For example, if a PC CD-ROM contains text then this can be loaded, but if the disk contains a program to display the text, this program cannot be run.

Adding an emulator such as the AT-ONCE would certainly allow some PC programs stored on a CD to run, but I'm not sure if the CDTV drive and the emulator would work well together. Besides, the emulator isn't really up to running games – only "serious" text-based programs.

The Apple Mac's file system is rather weird, and uses two file types (data and resource forks) where the Amiga uses one. This can cause

problems for AmigaDOS, although apparently it is possible to use a new CD-ROM File System on the Amiga to read Apple Mac disks. Again, data can be accessed, but the programs cannot be directly executed.

I wish I did know of some CDTV clubs – I have a CDTV, which is solely used for permanent PD software into my A4000.

PC, A1200 OR CD32?

I wonder if you could help me with a problem. I am torn between getting an A1200 or a CD32. I am not a programmer, and I doubt if I ever will be, but I want a powerful machine to play games on. What I really want to know is are PC games easy to convert to the CD32, and if so, are there likely to be any games converted from PC to CD32, such as the brilliant X-Wing?

I know that they are working on a CD version of Frontier, which will be like the PC version, but the software that comes free with the CD32 (so I've heard) is rubbish.

Please let me which machine is better for the gamer who wants PC quality games but can't afford a PC! Steve Oveill, Alton, Hants."

So, you're a frustrated PC gamer are you? If you want a PC that badly you should start looking around for secondhand 386 machines. It shouldn't cost considerably more than a CD32 or A1200.

But, if you want state-of-the-art hardware (and here I mean a computer designed after the 1970s), you should stick with Commodore. I reckon a CD32 is what you want. The CD-ROM means bigger and better games, and if it catches on like it should, there will soon be peripherals to add to all the A1200 features necessary for a complete horse computer.

The CD32 has a CPU of the same family as the other Amiga's – a Motorola 68020. This is as far from a PC's Intel brain as you can get, so converting games isn't easy. Besides, in order to take advantage of the more advanced Amiga graphics and sound, the game will need to be re-written anyway.

The AKIKO chip is rather misleading: it provides a reasonably quick way of providing a special "chunky" way of writing pixels in the same way the PC does. It will make certain tasks, such as texture mapping, quicker but if you won't make porting PC games any simpler.

The software that comes with the CD32 isn't gob-smackingly brilliant, but it is far from rubbish. Within six months there should be a few games that will give X-Wing a run for its money.

PARNET PROBLEMS

Does leaving an A1200 on overnight do any harm? Also, how can I get Parnet to work? I have linked my son's A1200 to my A4000/030 but it just won't work, please help me.

Mr. R.J. Blount, Minehead, Somerset.

Leaving the A1200 on overnight is a matter of personal taste. Some people don't even like leaving their video recorders on (which is why they always have 0000 flashing on them all the time). Certainly the risk of fire is present, although it is a very small one. If you are nervous, as a qualified electrician to inspect your wiring. The best thing you can do to fit a Smoke Detector/Fire Alarm in the same room

I frequently leave my computers on for days at a time, and once I even left it on whilst I went on holiday, although in retrospect this probably wasn't a wise move: last week my monitor caught fire as I was watching it. I would say that the solid state workings of an Amiga are incredibly unlikely to catch fire as there are only low voltages and currents present, unlike a TV or monitor where 26,000 volt sparks can shoot out the back and scare you awake, I'd say leaving the computer on overnight is fine, but always switch off the monitor at the mains. But don't hold me responsible!

Parnet is a notoriously tricky program to use. It took me weeks before I realised I had the cable made incorrectly. I would wager that most problems are due to the cable not being connected properly or just plain wired wrong.

When you do get the wiring right, the next thing is to start the server and client programs – this can be done in the user-startup file.

Now, make sure the NET: device is mounted: open a shell and enter mount net: (return).

Before any device can be accessed, if it is necessary to inform the system it exists. This can most easily be done by CD'ing to it. For example, to access the floppy disk on the remote machine, enter cd NET:d0 (return) at the shell.

To access the hard drive enter cd NET:h0 (return). You might want to create aliases to make access simpler: assign d1: net:d0 (return) will create a new device (d1:) which can be used like d0:

For more help on Parnet, get 17 Bit Software (Tel: 0924 386 382) on disk 3 or disk 2783, which is crammed with pictures and text. You'll have to pay them first, by the way.

Incidentally, if you are having problems with Parnet appearing to hang after long file transfers, you should look out PARNFS, and alternative set of routines which use the same Parnet device drivers. Although it introduces its own quirks, PARNFS is faster and more reliable. The only snag is that it is W62 only, but if it can be coaxied to work on the CDTV.

ROM I HAVE

I have recently bought an A1200 with an 8550 Hard drive. I'm very interested in the CD32. Could you please tell me when the CD-ROM drive for the A1200 will be released, how much it will cost and (my last question), will it fit into the PCMCIA card slot? Krisse Goodall, France.

No, I'm afraid I can't tell you, as the information has yet to be made public. What I can give you though is the best guess: I can make from what little facts are floating around.

First of all, don't hold your breath waiting. The Big C have said that they have the CD-ROM drive almost finished, but the big problem is cost – it will cost almost as much as a standard CD32.

The A1200 is really a miracle in the exercise of value for money and cost control. As the A1200 was designed well before the CD32, in my opinion it is unrealistic to expect an easy (and cheap) upgrade path.

Secondly, the CD-ROM drive will only fit to the trapdoor expansion. This leaves a problem as to where any user-installed extra memory or faster processor will go: at the moment it looks like the bin.

The really bad news is that currently there

appears to be no way to fit the FMV cartridge (the MPEG chips that allow real video footage to be shown from CD) to the A1200. It's all pretty messy really – perhaps by this time next year we'll look back and laugh at all the fuss we were making. Neh, we won't.

PLAY BY MAIL



I wish to purchase software that would enable me to run a 'play by mail' football game (I'm among the players of the game send their moves in via the post), but I'm having great difficulty locating any. Is there a company that could provide me with some?

Mark Clinion, Werley, West Midlands.

Sure there is: it's called AMOS or *Blitz Basic*, and the only snag is that you have to write it yourself. If you can't manage it, I'm sure some budding programming genius would be only too happy to volunteer their services.

Falling all that, I'm stuck. Perhaps if a software house is in fact publishing such a program they would let us all know.

ATARI RULES OKAY?



I've recently changed over from the Atari ST to the A1200, so I'm feeling a little bit at sea. My problems begin when I try to copy programs from one disk to another (especially cover disks).

I'm never sure which files need to be transferred or where to find them (not a problem on the ST). Have you any general tips on how to tell about copying programs from one place to another, and installing them onto hard disk? Peter Bardon, Bradford, West Yorkshire.

Copying programs is slightly trickier on the Amiga than on the ST because the Amiga has a proper operating system. The multi-tasking nature of the Workbench requires that a special re-entrant code is stored in particular places. This code, called libraries and devices, can be used by many programs at the same time. The operating system then arbitrates between the programs, making sure each gets its fair share of processor time, memory and any extras such as the printer, or serial port.

These code modules always live in the same place. The general purpose libraries stay in a drawer called LIBS; and I look at them all you need to do is open a window and type DIR LIBS; (return). Similarly, devices (such as the printer device) live in the DEVS: drawer. The AmigaDOS commands (such as LIST, DIR and so on) live in the C: directory.

Probably the bit that problem beginners meet is the fact that LIBS, DEVS; and the rest can move around. The disk that an Amiga first boots from (either floppy or hard) is assumed to contain LIBS, DEVS; and so on. Thus, if a computer boots from a hard disk then a cover disk program may no longer run because when it looks in LIBS: for a particular library, it can't find it. Instead of looking on the floppy, it's looking on the hard disk.

The solution is to copy the libraries and devices to the hard disk. Let's assume your program won't run because it needs the explode.library (this happens all the time when virus checking programs are copied). Boot from your normal disk (hard or floppy), open a Shell and then insert the floppy disk that contains the offending program. Enter 'copy

dir:lib\explode.library to LIBS:' and all should be well. Try entering 'resident copy' first if you get into a disk swapping frenzy.

MIDI MAYHEM



I recently purchased a Roland JV30 General MIDI synth, and I would like to sequence it using my Amiga. I own a bog standard A800 and I was considering buying a 4Mb PCMCIA card, a MIDI interface and Bars and Pipes 2.

Would Bars and Pipes 2 be able to utilize PCMCIA memory? And would this set-up work at a reasonable speed when processing information and performing tasks such as quantisation and putting my recordings on screen in traditional stave notation format?

I would be most grateful if you could answer my questions and I could demonstrate my appreciation by mentioning you in my first album! J. Riley, Woolton, Liverpool.

Hmmm, a JV30, lucky you. Any program will utilise extra memory, all that sort of thing is handled automatically by the operating system. It's only games and demos which ignore intuition and the OS that refuse to acknowledge memory above the standard 1Mb. However, you might find it a better idea to fit the trapdoor memory slot before buying an expensive 4Mb card.

Bars and Pipes 2 is a processor-intensive program, but that doesn't mean you won't be able to use it. The beauty of Bars and Pipes 2 means that a lot of processing, quantisation for example, needs to be only done once. You should be able to construct some very advanced pieces before speed becomes a problem.

Unfortunately, Bars and Pipes 2 won't display your songs in traditional notation. The closest it will manage is a sort of block and grid display. If this is important to you, consider buying the Deluxe Music Construction Set 2.

MONITORING THE SITUATION



I own an A1200 and I'm wondering which monitor to get. The Commodore 1942 or the Microvite 1440 Multiscan? I need A24 and VGA compatibility with a flicker-free display in all modes.

What is the difference between Multi and Dual sync monitors? Which would be better for video games? I've been searching for five months and have about £450 to spend. Harat Juze Badovany, Amman, Jordan.

Less things first: Multi and Dual sync displays. The new Amiga range (the A1200 and A4000) are the first Amigas to have a programmable video output (okay, to be picky the ECS chipset in the A500+ was, but only just). This means the video signal can exist at different horizontal and vertical frequencies.

Standard PAL works at 15.72kHz horizontally, and 50Hz vertically (the former is a DoublePAL screen (the flicker-free display) works at 27.50 kHz horizontally and 48Hz vertically. This is fairly close to the PC standard VGA, which wants 31.5 kHz. Most, but not all, PC monitors will display DoublePAL mode. Some need the extra VGAOnly program to be placed in the Workbench drawer to slightly alter the scan rate. These monitors will not work with the 15kHz signal which all games use. The

15kHz was chosen to permit usage with domestic television sets.

The standard 1084 Commodore/Philips monitor only works at 15.72kHz, and will therefore not support DoublePAL mode; it will flicker.

The 1942, and 1940, are dual sync monitors, which means they will work at 15.72kHz as before and also at 27.50kHz for a flicker-free DoublePAL display.

These monitors should also display Euro72 mode, which is a 20.52kHz/50Hz display. As it works at 50Hz it is updated more regularly than DoublePAL or PAL, and is a bit easier on the eyes.

The Microvite is a multiscan monitor (like the old Commodore 1960), in that it will try its best to work with all video signals, irrespective of frequency.

From an Amiga owner's point of view, this means one more screen mode: Super72 (23.21kHz/71Hz) which gives a rock steady display, but too small to be useful.

Anyway, the point is that a 1942 is a particularly good monitor, with a high resolution display and the bonus of stereo speakers. The Microvite is a true multiscan, and should work with anything (although rumours of some software incompatibilities are starting to surface).

I would recommend you get a 1942, which will give you a good picture for games, good sound and also a flicker-free display.

Incidentally, in order of preference, here are my favourite screen modes (i.e. less likely to give me a headache after staring at the screen all day). Try them in order until your monitor can't cope: PAL, Euro36, DblPAL, Euro72 and Multiscan.

APPLE TURNOVER



I am looking for a program, like CrossDOS, that will allow me to transfer normal text files between Amiga and Macintosh formatted disks. It is very important that I can find such a program so I can continue work at college and at home. If there are any programs that are on the PD circuit, shareware or even commercial, can you please let me know the title, the price and the name of the company concerned. Ryan Morse, Milton Keynes.

You already have all the programs you need: CrossDOS. Using this program (which all new A1200s and A4000s are supplied with as standard, by the way) the Amiga can read and write to PC format disks. You can also format disks PC style from the CLI, by typing 'format drive pc: name PCDSK;' (return).

All Apple Mac computers come with a program called Apple File Exchange, which is a utility which will read and write PC disks. Problem solved!

If you want to read or write Macintosh format disks directly, you'll need to invest in a little extra hardware: namely an Emuland Mac emulator and a suitable floppy disk drive. I guess that as you're at college this will probably be outside your price range...

NEXT MONTH

There will be plenty more Q&A next month, so write with your queries to: Ask and Answer, C/O AMIGA, Priory Court, 30-32 Farlington Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

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We all know there are times when you just have to be heard, when you are screaming inside, when you feel like no one truly knows how you feel. If you need to talk, Tony Dillon is a fairly desperate measure.

A LITTLE DEFENCE

I am writing to express my shock when reading the January issue of my favourite magazine (CU AMIGA of course). Almost every letter that I read was to complain about the magazine. All I can say is that these people obviously had temporary brain displacement while writing their letters.

Heaving said this I am rather jealous of my friend who has subscribed to a rival magazine as I would very much like to subscribe to CU AMIGA, but there doesn't seem to be a page with any details of how to do this. Also, I have only been reading CU AMIGA since May, so I would like to purchase some back issues, but there isn't a page on back issues either.

I don't want you to think that I am complaining because I think that CU AMIGA is the best magazine around and I will continue to buy it as long as I have an Amiga.

Mark Cliff, Wednesbury.

You want a subscription? You can subscribe! All right, so we don't crow about it like other magazines, but our subscription details are there on the contents pages for all to see (just below the back letters bit). We have plans for an enormous promotion to go with subscriptions soon, although these have yet to be finalised. Watch this space.

SCOTCH MIST

Last year I bought an A1200 but after nine months, I logged it due to the lack of the promised software. Anyway, now that the software houses have got their dundee cakes together I'm thinking of purchasing a new machine. The problem is that both the 1200 and CD32 seem very limited due to the limitations of the trapdoor expansion slot. I.e. you have to choose between a CD Drive costing almost the same as a CD32 as an accelerator? I feel this is a serious miss up by big C—especially for non-logging dundie like me.

The biggest I ex-pas, however is Commodore's lack of support for their advertisement. Try as I might I couldn't find an outlet

for logging CD32s in either Perth or Dundee. Now call me lucky but when you have a £7 million ad campaign, it seems sensible to make the product you're logging available. I never saw one in any of the large electrical outlets or more disturbing, any of the special computer shops including the software house owned by OMA.

I finally tracked down a CD32 in the local Clydebank branch here in Ayrshire. Commodore may be good at making computers, but they're no good at marketing. I'd get rid of these so-called marketing gurus. At least it would reduce any unnecessary overheads.

On another subject I am very interested in OTP and would love to be able to produce laminates, but how do I go about it? I think it would be interesting if you were to run an article on the production of mags and laminates, even about how you produce CU AMIGA.

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



*Young urban scientist

Last month you said in Backchat that the screenshots of *Inferno* which were PC shots are identical to that to be seen on the Amiga. However I read in a PC mag that DIO will be using less than the 256 colours available for the Amiga version in order to keep the speed up. Who is right?

Also "worried mother" seems to be one of these typical politically-correct angst cokes. Maybe she should realise that CU AMIGA is a predominantly guys mag, not totally but more guys buy it and hey, guys enjoy these types of things. Besides, can't she get it into her head that it's just a bit of fun and if anyone doesn't like it, they don't need to buy it. Simple really. Ian McEwan, Ayrshire.

If it's one thing to criticise, but it's another to constructively criticise. If you really think Commodore's marketing (the Christmas was a little off, than what would you do to improve it? Anyone? Answers on a postcard to the usual address.

Your luck is in this month, I'm because on page 152-163 here is the first part a tutorial aimed specifically at Desktop publishing on the Amiga.

On the subject of the *Inferno* screenshots, at the time of writing the review, the aim was to make the game look exactly the same on the Amiga.

CD GRUMBLES

How come if I want to buy floppy disk based software then CU AMIGA gives me a complete breakdown of the product down to what machines it will run on. However, change the format to CD ROM and this sensible approach goes out of the window.

For example, in the January issue the Insight Technology CD was reviewed in the CD32 Zone as a CD32-only product. This is not true as it will run on a CDTV (through Workbench) and I don't doubt it will run on the A570 as well.

I expect the best from CU AMIGA and in this respect you are not delivering it. Why not change the name of CD32 Zone to CD ROM Zone. You're going to have a name change soon with the release of a CD drive for the A1200 anyway. Philip Bowden, Middlessex.

CD32 Zone contains news for the CD32 and other related Amiga CD markets. So we don't have to change the name, and going by the news that there probably won't be a CD drive for the 1200 (at least, not from Commodore), we probably never will.

TEAM TALK

'Ho no, you can't possibly!', cries Lise. A Team Talk without Dan? Can it be done? Does anyone remember life before him? CU AMIGA shares their favourite childhood memories with you, our lovely readers.

LISA COLLINS



Who would think it, but the object of John Kennedy's desire was a real fear away as a child, almost expelled four or five times. At one point she was responsible for smothering the front tooth of a boy got behind her in class, and worst of all she used to torture her dolls, smothering them across the face with a ruler until their cheeks cracked. Presumably they had missed their deadlines.

TONY DILLON



Before he degenerated into the hair bear he is now, Tony was a bit of a hot item at school. Respected by school mates and teachers alike, his biggest dream to fame was the fact that, upon entering the Juniors in Primary School, he was doing more advanced maths than the kids in the top class leaving for Secondary School. Needless to say, he was beaten up on a regular basis.

IN VIEW OF THE AMIGA

I'm writing to you to ask about the Amiga market. I'm the Amiga really seen by the industry? A dying machine or a growing one? I'm a bit worried, that's all. I really can't believe that PC owners are in a position where they can even buy 16-bit down Amigas.

On the Teletext magazine (Digitext) today, a result of a survey in the industry shows that Amigas only account for 10% of the companies software sales, 16 out of the 18 people quizzed thought the Amiga would be dead by 1995. Only two people thought CD32 would make it - apparently some think that Commodore is heading for bankruptcy. What I want to know is if (according to you) CD32 is heading for sales of 400,000 by the end of January, why the lack of confidence in the product? Hall the companies said they were producing for PC CD and Mega CD yet there was no mention of CD32. And why is everyone investing in 300 and at the same time complaining that it's too expensive?

Please tell me how many units the CD32 has sold in the UK. Also these good sales and will they make the industry seriously take note - companies like Virgin who said they wanted to see how it was marketed and how much it would sell. How much does it need to sell to save Commodore and the Amiga, and to get proper software investment?

Another thing, when will Commodore tell the world about the Amiga as a "serious" machine? There's no point having the best OS and software like Final Writer and Wordworth 3 if non-Amiga owners don't know about them. Cherty, Amigaed.com.

The Amiga is a machine that is not only surviving, but thriving! Just look at the sales for last Christmas. Console sales were up! The industry still supports the Amiga, and will continue to do so. As for Commodore telling the world about the seductive power of the Amiga, they don't really have to when there are programs like *Scale* and hardware like the *Video Toaster* ruling the world. I don't have the official figures yet for how many CD32s have been sold - but rumours have it that over 70,000 have been sold already.

SENSIBLE THOUGHTS

I have read with interest over the years the contributing debates about software piracy. You have those for it, complaining about the price of software and those equating saying that piracy is the cause of high prices.

This got me to thinking about another industry that is plagued by piracy - the music industry. The average price for a cassette tape is £3.50, for a CD £13.50 but for a piece of gaming software £25-£30! If a music cassette costs about £1 to record and package etc., a CD we're told about £2, a computer disk, my own personal estimate is about 75p - that's a one disk and its recording costs, packaging etc. So why does a disk cost 30 times

LETTER OF THE MONTH

HONESTY IS BEST

I was astonished to read Tony Dillon's excessively negative review of Digital Integration's *Tornado* fight simulator in the December issue of CU AMIGA. His claim that, "On an A1200, with most of the detail off, you are taking a frame every two seconds" seemed particularly preposterous.

I immediately phoned Digital Integration about the review, asking "Surely this cannot be true?" I was relieved to hear from their PR Lady that of course it wasn't true. Tony Dillon had seen an early pre-release version which was nothing like the finished product, and on a 1200 of course it was smooth and fast, etc etc.

Well, when this light sim eventually did hit the shelves, I almost bought it (in all series of the phrase).

Fortunately two things stopped me. The awful memory of Tony Dillon's review and the fact that on the side of the box was a label stating "Accelerator card recommended".

I asked for a demo. What a shock! With all the detail all low setting on a 1200 it was impossible to fly. The frame rate was actually about two frames per second, which is of course ludicrous for a light simulator.

Thanks for your honest review, Tony. I'm sorry I doubted you. Guess it's back to Vietnam in my intruder until somebody can come up with a decent new light simulator. Mike Euselec, Leeds.

There you go Mike. How does you doubt my word, CU AMIGA will never review a game that isn't in a reviewable state. *Pro-Release* does not automatically mean unfinished. Why would Digital Integration bother to show us something that ran so slowly as *Tornado* does if it was going to be much faster and smoother when released?

more than its initial value and tapes and CDs only eight and seven times more respectively?

You might argue that a lot of time, manpower and effort goes into producing a piece of software, but is this not also true for a piece of music? You might argue that software does not have as large a user base as music, but then again there are some musicians that are not very well known, but their product costs the same, or in some cases LESS than popular musicians such as Michael Jackson or U2 etc. I mean, how many fans has Mr. Bobby got?

Users:	PC	Millions upon millions.
	Consoles	Millions
	Amigas	A few million
	STs	A few dozen
	Mr Bobby	A few thousand.
Cost:	PCs	Floppy
	Consoles	£48
	Amiga/ST	£25
	Mr Bobby	Less than £2.

TONY HORGAN



Things I musical too-to be career extends way back into his rhythmic past, with the ang-like spicy heard demian hitting over the school days with his. Just like the *Real World* Big Fun! record player and a collection of *Alibi*, *Sparks* and *Sonny M* does hits. Also, he remembers the glow of pride when he wearing his first look top, and a pair of fading *Jonas* trousers.

You might say that to get quality you must pay the price, and Mr. Bobby's song is only worth £3, but remember the best song in the world still only sells for £3? It also seems to me that the bigger the user base the more expensive the product! Does the song "right" to you?

Don't get me wrong I am in no way condoning piracy! All I'm saying is that the software houses do not have any argument as far as overpricing goes. Computer software is overpriced! Until it falls to a "realistic" value, piracy is here to stay! Philip Clague, Wrexham.

Remember a song released in the charts makes money from the single sale, from sales of the album, live performances, cassette sales, CD sales, vinyl sales and merchandising. An Amiga game makes its money purely on the sales of the disk. Also, don't be too quick to assume that every single released makes money. True, a track by Michael Jackson will make a fortune, but a track by Talisman *Harlequin Sensation* won't. If anything, they're probably run to a loss. Unfortunately, if the PC World is anything to go by, games are going to become more expensive as time goes on. It takes a lot of work to fill a CD, and this is something we're all going to have to pay for.

FRONTIER PHYSICS

I'm writing to you line and excellent magazine with reference to Stuart Murook's letter in January's CU AMIGA concerning Frontier. Since its release there has been a small amount of whingers who rip the game to shreds without seeing the depth and the accuracy of detail on a subject which is still a subject of unknown territory.

I do admit your rating was a little lenient (97%) the game is still a milestone in computer programming. You cleared up the autopilot and dodging computer problem but you didn't clear up the problem of acceleration and deceleration. On how fast I am to finally explain this bit of information, "have gone". On Earth we are fortunate to have gravity. This means that if you throw a ball up into the air (disregarding mass/area) the force acting against the gravity would propel the ball upwards until the force in the ball is equal to gravity, whereupon the ball would start to fall to Earth and gather speed.

In space, however, there is no gravity so there is no force acting against a solid object. If you move an object at 10 mph, the object would come with a solid object at (a) it comes into contact with a solid object or (b) an opposing force of 10 mph is applied, whereupon the solid would come to a halt.

All this is explained in a far more complex theory in Appendix III of the manual. I can't help but feel the standard of education has declined. David Braiden should be congratulated on the accuracy of his puns. Robert Barlow, Hull.

Well, I'm glad that cleared up their *Brain* mess. One day, now there's a load of *computer* apples all over the carpet, and who is going to clean that up? Eh?

JOHN KENNEDY



John may look like a pleasant happy fellow who cheerfully endorses a particular brand of steel, but in reality he too was a socialist child, which explains the connection with *John's* fondness for *John's* go out swimming, and then he took first year some one during his favourite part of the whole experience was watching him get it and

MAT BROOMFIELD



Mat's a mellow kind of guy, and the reasons behind his become completely evident when he sits back and tells you that his favourite childhood memory was that of his dad digging him out of bed in the morning to take him to school before he went off to work. I'm sorry, I can't be sarcastic about the one. It's not making me go all teary-eyed.

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Okay, so the
CD32 has been
around for a lit-
tle while now,
but Mat



Broomfield
thinks it's time to think
about the future.

As far as Commodore's concerned, the CD32 ought to come with wings and a halo! Why? Well, if the word on the street was to be believed, Commodore were at a make or break stage in the latter half of last year, and CD32 was the product that held their future in the balance. Amidst a well-choreographed whirl of PR hype, the CD32 was launched to a generally good reception. It sold well, despite the non-appearance of more than half of the promised software titles. This came as no surprise, I don't think there's ever been a computer launched that actually received the software at the promised release time.

One thing that did materialise, however, was the FMV cartridge which enables the CD32 to play video CDs. This is seen by many as an integral feature of CD32's initial success, for it gives the machine appeal to a wider audience — i.e. not just gamers.

It's ironic then, that most people think that the CD32 was designed as a rival to the consoles, doubly ironic when you consider the fact that both Sega and Nintendo reported a disastrous period of Christmas sales despite massive price cuts. So, is the CD32 the proud herald of a new generation of machines?

I think that it is. Thanks to new machines like Jaguar, CD32 and 3DO, people have had their sights raised to a new level of performance. However, although the Jaguar only costs about £200, there aren't any games available for it, and even when they appear, they're probably going to be on cartridges costing £50 upwards. As for 3DO, its \$700 price tag will put condemnations to death before I even hit the streets. Sure it'll sell, but it'll never be a mass market machine. As for Philips CD-I, which is not too expensive — well, how many great CD-I games can you mention?

So what does all this add up to? Simple, hundreds of millions of pounds, dollars and yen spent on raising people's awareness of the new technology, and only CD32 and the A1200 in a position to capitalise on it! And why? Because CD32 is a) Here now, b) Cheap, c) Has cheap software and d) Has expansion potential.

Commodore have also rather shrewdly targeted the machine at gamers and underplayed the machine's further expansion capabilities. However, since Christmas, I suspect that they're now gearing up to add another prong to their assault, this one aimed squarely between Philips' eyes — FMV (Full Motion Video). FMV is now with distributors across the country, and whilst at the time of writing, it's not actually shipping, there seems to be little doubt that it will be available in shops by the time you read this.

Initially, the FMV will offer nothing more than the facility to play Video CDs, a prospect which I don't find that thrilling, although I realise that it could raise the standards of video recordings. I can also appreciate the fact that you now get an opportunity to go and make a cup of tea whilst the other half changes the CD half way through

CD32 - WHERE TO NOW?

the film (at present each CD can only hold 72 minutes of video).

Far more interesting however are the possibilities that this medium opens up at least for true multi-media software, where full-screen, Dolby stereo video footage will become an integral part of the program. So considering the fact that CD32 is at this moment, the most advanced CD-based machine anywhere in the world on a power-to-price basis, why does its appearance betide its capabilities? HG Wells and the makers of *Lost in Space* might have thought that a plastic-coated future where everything was streamlined seemed

like a good idea, but the reality of the situation is that the CD32 just looks tacky and cheap, like a young child's toy.

This is a real tragedy because, if I were designed to sit in with most people's component hi-fi systems, it would be far more appealing to the general public, and they'd be likely to take it more seriously as an addition to their home entertainment systems. Anyway (the glitch aside, it really does look as if Commodore have got it together, with the UK division proudly leading the way forward (in all its plastic glory). Well done guys, we're all watching... **CD**



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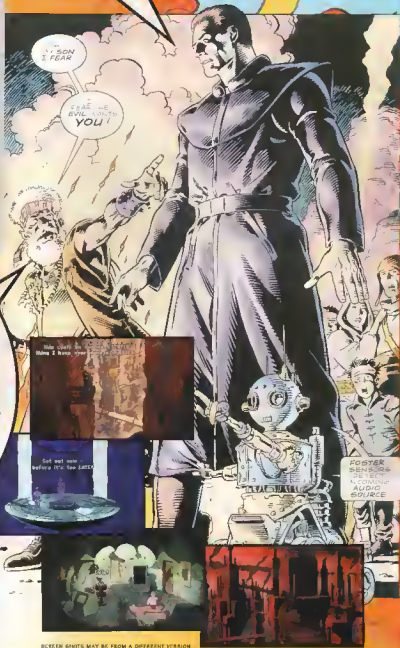
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